THE GALILEAN

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THE GALILEAN

THE PERMANENT ELEMENT IN RELIGION

BY

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PREFACE

If a visitor from Mars were to ask me what is carpentry, I should point him to a carpenter at work. In order to answer the question, what is religion, I have pointed the reader to Jesus of Nazareth, who, whatever else he may have been, was certainly the supremely religious man. In considering his life we shall see religion at work. As carpentry cannot be learnt from a book, so neither can religion; and as carpentry is not a state of pleasant feelings—though I imagine that a well-turned table must warm the heart of him who makes it—so religion, for all its satisfactions and comforts, is not in itself a pleasurable feeling or succession of feelings; rather, as carpentry is the art of so dealing with wood as to convert rough timber into tables, chairs, book-cases and doors, religion is the art of so dealing with experience as to make of life as a whole that which it is meant to be.

I make no apology for the simple and untechnical speech in which this book is written; I have urged elsewhere that it is our duty to deliver religion from "the jargon of theology and dead metaphysics," and I am persuaded that it must be possible to express religion, which is a universal human need, in terms that are universally intelligible.

This book is not a contribution to historical research, but an attempt to state in the light of present needs and present problems the essence of all true religion as I understand it. From the nature of the task, I have not been able to avoid what is controversial; but in the following discussions, which range over most of our great religious problems, I have tried to write only that which would be of interest to the general reader. But in case this book should fall into the hands of any expert, I have added as

a slight personal defence a few footnotes which the gentle "layman" will forgive and in most cases, it is hoped, omit.

I am indebted to three friends in particular for help. All who know *Grace and Personality* will appreciate my obligation to Dr. J. Oman of Westminster College; the Rev. W. Fearon Halliday, M.A., of New Barnet,[1] has given me invaluable help and advice; to my colleague, the Rev. C. H. Dodd, M.A., of Mansfield College, I am grateful for many suggestions of which I have freely availed myself. I have also a strong suspicion that even more than I am consciously aware I stand indebted both to the written and spoken word of Dr. T. R. Glover; of set purpose I have kept myself from reading what he has written on these matters while this book has been in preparation, lest I should borrow from him more than becomes a friend.

It has recently become the habit to write the pronouns referring to God and Christ (He, Him, Who, Whom, etc.) with a capital letter. I have throughout preferred to revert to the tradition of the English Bible.

My title is a reminiscence of the words ascribed to the dying Emperor Julian, *Vicisti, O Galilæe!* and my book may be some little answer to Swinburne's desolate line:

> Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from thy breath.

N. M.

Mansfield College,
January 15, 1920.

For this New Edition I have made a few alterations and corrections, but the book is substantially unchanged.

N. M.

Selly Oak,
August 1921

[1] Now Professor at the Selly Oak Colleges.

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THE GALILEAN

CHAPTER I

JESUS AS CARPENTER

What was he doing all that time,
From twelve years old to manly prime ?
Was he then idle, or the less
About his Father's business ?

WILLIAM BLAKE

I. A Workman's Cottage

Thirty years of his life Jesus lived in Nazareth, first as "the carpenter's son" and then as "the carpenter." How shall we picture that home ? What manner of house was it ? Tradition will not help us here ; but we may note that on many occasions houses are mentioned in the Gospels, and one only, the house of a wealthy man in Jerusalem where was celebrated the last supper, had an upper storey ; the rest were what we should call bungalows or rather, in some cases, mere huts, built of mud or cob. Importunate friends could break through the roof of the house where he later made his home in Capernaum, in order to let the sick man down upon a stretcher. Many houses, and very probably the Nazareth home amongst them, had but a single room ; when a neighbour knocked on the door late at night, it was not necessary for the goodman

of the house to get up to speak to him; he could answer conveniently from the bed; the house was so small that if one lit a candle and placed it on the candlestick it gave light to "the whole house."[1] Jesus, we may presume, was brought up in a house where the loss of a sixpence was a very serious matter; when such a thing occurred Mary would sweep the whole house carefully to find it, and if she found it, she would be so pleased that she would go round to all her neighbours and bid them rejoice with her. The little room, which would have a door but no window and would be furnished with a shelf perhaps and a few pots and pans and some bedding, must serve for bedroom and parlour and kitchen and possibly workshop too, so far as the work was not done out of doors. The children's playground would be the hills round about the village and the market square, where they would play weddings and funerals and other childish games.[2]

We sometimes think of Nazareth as lying far away from "the dusty ways of men," secluded and sheltered in the hills; that is partly true, for it lies in a cup among the hills; but the children would think it nothing of a climb up to the brim of the cup, and then what a view spread before them! and what memories they would learn to connect with the places they could see! "Esdraelon lies before you, with its twenty battlefields—the scenes of Barak's and of Gideon's victories, the scenes of Saul's and Josiah's defeats, the scenes of the struggles for freedom in the glorious days of the Maccabees. There is Naboth's vineyard and the place of Jehu's

[1] Matt. v. 15. It is interesting to note that in the Lukan parallel (Luke xi. 33) a Roman villa (with a hall-light) is contemplated.

[2] Matt. xi. 16.

revenge upon Jezebel; there Shunem and the house of Elisha; there Carmel and the place of Elijah's sacrifice. To the east the Valley of Jordan, with the long range of Gilead; to the west the radiance of the Great Sea, with the ships of Tarshish and the promise of the Isles. You see thirty miles in three directions. It is a map of Old Testament history." [1]

Not very many strangers, it may be, and no sight-seers would come through Nazareth for the children to gaze at, but the main roads were not far away, and many children, as they grew up, would be taken in the party up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts. On the high roads they would meet with the caravans of traders and of pilgrims, foreigners from all the East, Roman legionaries, a party of Herod's troops, the Imperial post, a deputation going to Rome to put their case before Cæsar, perhaps a party of criminals on their way to trial and crucifixion; there would be priests and Levites and publicans and strolling theatrical companies. And all these things Jesus would see when he was a boy, and Mary would tell him of the Roman oppression and of what the prophets had predicted when "King Messiah" should come; and as they passed some traveller "with a lean and hungry look" people would whisper, "There goes a Zealot; there goes a real patriot; surely the trumpet will sound soon in Israel, and the arm of the Lord be revealed; the Romans will be driven out of Jerusalem, and the dogs shall lick their blood as they licked the blood of Jezebel." For it was on everybody's lips that the "kingdom" or "rule" of God must come,

[1] *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, by Prof. George Adam Smith, p. 433.

that the days of Cæsar's rule were numbered, and that at last the down-trodden peoples would be avenged on the strong and the oppressor. The Jews of Jesus' day felt towards the Roman Empire much what a smaller nation feels now towards the Imperialism of its powerful neighbours or what the "submerged tenth," when they become articulate, feel about their exploiters. Naturally men took up very different attitudes to the situation; some, the Zealots, were for appealing for the sword at once; others expected God to intervene with a miracle and deliver them; there were a few, "the poor," as they were called, or "the quiet in the land," who looked for a renewed Israel and a spiritual kingdom, and who believed that God had a nobler destiny for his people than the violent politicians and the exclusive religious officials were able to understand.

It is necessary to say a word about these last, for it is likely that Joseph[1] and Mary were of this way of thinking, and there is reason to suppose that when Mary was praying for the child she was expecting, she did not pray for him that which so many mothers desire first for their child, namely that he should be extremely successful and wring much money from his neighbours and get the upper hand over them; she did not even pray that he might deliver his people from their oppressors; no, her prayer was rather that he might deliver his people "from their sins." So far from praying that he might grow up to smite the oppressor and slay the Roman, she joined in the prayer that he might be "a light to lighten the Gentiles,"

[1] The training of a Hebrew boy was chiefly entrusted to his father.

that is, the Romans, and that *so* he might be "the glory of his people Israel." But she prayed also that the mighty might be "cast down from their seat"; and perhaps in her own mind the two prayers were not quite reconciled, so that when the answer came she was disappointed and for a while did not believe; but we shall come to that later.[1]

II. Religion in Common Life

There is reason to think that the father died when Jesus was still a boy or a very young man.[2] Mary was left a widow with a large family, and Jesus as her chief support. He would need to throw himself into the business, and there would be Mary to comfort as far as he could, and there would be all the little worries and troubles and anxieties that his brothers and sisters would bring to him; he could scarcely look for peace and quiet in that crowded little house; what time would he get to himself? Surely he would be far too busy to be a *very* religious person! On the contrary, religion is for *life*, and it is only in *life* that man can be religious. We err greatly if we think that the religion which Jesus taught was something that came to him after he had left the shop, or that it cannot be practised by people immersed in ordinary affairs; the religion

[1] I am not romancing here, neither have I any exact evidence for what I say. It is practically certain that Mary belonged to the spiritually minded circle I describe, and I am simply seeking to envisage and describe that which historical probability clearly indicates.

[2] The strongest evidence for this is that when his family wish to restrain him from his work (Mark iii. 31–5), it is his mother and his brothers who come for him. Had the father been alive he would assuredly have taken the initiative.

he taught and lived in his public ministry was his home religion. The Jewish "carpenter" was also a mason and builder. It was usually supposed that God was to be found in some special way in the Temple and the services and ceremonies of the Church (an idea still common amongst ourselves), but there is a saying of Jesus which comes down to us outside our canonical Gospels and which may well be genuine, "Cleave the wood, and thou shalt find me; lift the stone, and I am there." Now cleaving the wood and lifting the stone is the chief business of the working builder.[1] It was in the home and shop that Jesus found that "long prayers" and religious rites and ceremonies are not religion. The so-called Sermon on the Mount is not a distant ideal which his poetic fancy painted but a transcript of his own religion, which he practised first in the very straitened circumstances at Nazareth. It was there he learnt that the poor in spirit, being always more anxious to share with others than to insist upon what is all their own, are the happy people, and those who mourn until quarrels are put right and misunderstandings cleared up, and those who hunger and thirst after the right relationship with all the family, and those who being pure and singleminded are able to reconcile differences and are ready to suffer anything rather than let wrongdoing pass unchallenged. This paraphrase does not exhaust the meaning of the Beatitudes, but we should remember that Jesus lived the happy or "blessed" life as a carpenter or working mason before he lived it in the wider world; it was as a "layman" in

[1] Contrast the silent rearing of Solomon's Temple, "like some tall palm," in days when it was thought that the sound of hammer or of chisel must be kept far from religion.

the common round at home and at work that he learnt life's very secret. But, as everybody knows, it is not the very easiest thing in the world to live this life ; it means death to selfishness ; and Holman Hunt was surely right when in his famous picture he shows the shadow of the Cross already there in the carpenter's shop.[1]

There is a story told of Jesus that at the age of twelve he was taken to Jerusalem by his parents ; they lost him, and when they found him in the Temple, his excuse or rather reply to their expostulation was, "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" This answer is worth our pondering ; for to Jesus, God is always "the Father," and when he came forward later as "Messiah" or God's representative, the God he represented was always Father rather than King or Lord of hosts or distant "Providence." It was in that crowded, busy home that he came to know the Fatherhood of God. God for him was everywhere and in everything. This does not mean that he ascribed evil deeds to the will of God, nor that he thought God had caused the tower of Siloam to fall upon its victims as a punishment (this he explicitly denied), but that in every circumstance he was in touch with God and responded to God's call in every situation.

For ourselves, it may be, we find it fairly easy to call God Father in the great crises of life ; when there is a wedding in the family or a birth or a funeral, we turn to religion ; but when we are

[1] It has been argued by some that Jesus cared nothing for art. But only his contemporaries saw his handicraft. Was it "cunningly wrought" or carelessly finished? Did not the cattle also know that his yoke was easy and his burden light?

plodding along the familiar tracks, one inauspicious day everything goes wrong, whether it be breakages in the kitchen or delays in the post or a smoking fire or a touch of neuralgia or the mislaying of a letter or some trouble in the office; in these calamities (which we are pleased to call "crosses") we lose our tempers, doubt Providence, and consider life to be meaningless and wanton, "as a tale told by an idiot." It is in the ordinary events of life that our real religious problem lies. When Jesus was apprenticed to his father and first began to be a carpenter and to wield the hammer and the nails, did not his finger slip sometimes? Is it not written of his carpentering days as of his later that "he learned by the things that he suffered"? For it is impossible to think that in that busy, crowded home at Nazareth tiresome, irritating, provoking things were never known; yet it was when everything went wrong, as we say, when Mary was tired and disconsolate, and the children were noisy and difficult, and customers were importunate, and the weather unpropitious, that Jesus learnt to know that peace which "the world can neither give nor take away." For the meaning of life lies in "the acceptance of the duty God demands and acquiescence in the discipline he appoints, not as submission to the inevitable, but as the discovery that our blessedness is in God's purpose. So long as we can shun life's worst tasks and trials, we might be happy, but to be blessed is to know that there are none we ever need to shun, because, through our Father's unfailingly gracious relation to us in all things, there is nothing we may not face and turn to profit. . . . Only as we discover in them a purpose worthy of us as children of God are all things ours, Cephas

and the world, things secular as well as things sacred, sorrows as well as joys, the weakness of decay as well as the buoyancy of youth, failure as well as success, loneliness as well as friendship, death as well as life."[1] It seems that Jesus never thought of God as inflicting petty irritations and worries, but each trouble, little or great, as it came, was to him a God-given opportunity of responding to a call which involved both the building up of character and the service and advantage of others. He saw that God's world is so made that man can never be happy in it unless he treat his neighbour as a brother and take all his experience as a Father's gracious dealing with him. He found in Nazareth not only that the man who takes this attitude to life is happy, but that there is no possibility of happy home life or neighbourhood life on any other principles; for men are so made that only on these terms can they be truly happy, and so to see life is to have the key to its very meaning. For *religion is not a system of dogmas nor a mysterious experience but the right attitude to life.*

III. What is Religion?

Experience comes to us all unasked; as long as we live we go on experiencing; but so far as religion and our happiness and our spiritual and temporal welfare are concerned, what matters is the way we take our experience. Religion is the right attitude to life and to experience; it is to see things as they are, and to respond to them rightly.

[1] J. Oman, *Grace and Personality*, 2nd ed., pp. 92 and 96. The first sentence quoted is italicised in the original.

Religion is often presented to us as a matter of special, mysterious, inward states of *feeling*, and the supremely religious person or "saint" is taken to be the person who sees visions and enjoys ecstasies or perhaps is converted in some particular kind of way; and many people are depressed because nothing of that sort has come to them; they fear they are not religious, when as a matter of fact they merely lack the emotional temperament or have no time in a busy life for ecstasies. They forget that Paul disparages these more showy and ecstatic gifts, and says that the supremely desirable and religious gift is "love," which means the right attitude to God and to our neighbour. They are much misled who suppose that religion is a matter of inward experiences unrelated to life. Others again have supposed that religion is a matter of understanding remote and metaphysical theories or some theological scheme of salvation, but if we are to wait till we can understand all manner of speculative theories (not to mention till we can believe them), then religion becomes the perquisite of the erudite and the leisured; it ceases to be either the religion of Jesus or a possible religion for humanity. True religion is the right attitude to life. The religious man is distinguished from the irreligious not by the kind of experiences he gets (for both are liable to toothache and loss as well as to prosperity), but by the way he reacts to his experience, by the way he takes it.

Imagine four boys standing on the deck of a ship at night; passing by them in the darkness is another ship, its form invisible; all that can be seen is the twinkling flashes at the mast-head as a message is being passed by the Morse code. One boy being

of an artistic turn of mind says, "How pretty!" and he takes delight in watching the twinkling lights; another being of a nervous and highly strung disposition says that it makes him feel giddy and irritates him; he wishes the thing would keep quiet and not be so jumpy; another boy can make nothing of it, is more than half-frightened by it, and thinks it is sheer black magic. But there is one boy who understands the code; he may think it pretty, and he may find it a bit trying to watch; he may even think it wonderful and mysterious, but for him its significance lies in none of these things but in its meaning as he reads the message and knows that there are shoals or icebergs to be avoided or that the way is clear and the journey safe. Now all life's experience, if we understand it, is nothing but a Morse code.[1] To some who are of the artistic temperament life is just pretty; it is full of pleasurable experiences. But such people are shutting their eyes to a large part of reality and are not facing the facts of life; and when reality bears down upon them, as in time of war or pestilence, and when they are forced to realise that the world is not such a gay merry-go-round as they had supposed, then their whole scheme of life breaks down; they are like children who have gone a-maying and suddenly look up to find that the skies are grown dark and their mother is not there. To others, if we may judge by external appearances, life is just a series of irritations; everything crosses them; nothing works well for them; the universe, they feel, is against them; for them "the gaudy, blabbing and remorseful day" alternates with "the tragic

[1] For the metaphor of the Morse code in connection with experience I am deeply indebted to Dr. Oman.

melancholy night " ; so they are resentful and cross-grained, a burden to themselves and to all who come into contact with them. To others again life and experience are but unintelligible mystery ; they can make neither head nor tail of it all ; it frightens them and overwhelms them ; they are

> like one lost in a thorny wood,
> That rends the thorns and is rent with the thorns,
> Not knowing how to find the open air,
> But toiling desperately to find it out.

To the religious man experience offers much that is beautiful, much that is thwarting and disappointing, much that is dark and mysterious, and yet through it all he reads the meaning of it ; it is to him as a Morse code message,[1] and he hears his Father say, " It is I ; be not afraid." God is not one who will work private miracles for any of his servants ; nor is he a far-away Providence who rules by general laws and abstract formulae ; nor is it he who inflicts upon us calamities and troubles which are due to the sins and ignorance of ourselves and others, but he is the Father who through every experience that comes to us is trying to signal his meaning, and to make known his presence.

A man comes home tired in the evening and flings himself into his chair. He suddenly becomes aware that his chair is more than usually comfortable to-night ; he looks round and finds a new, soft cushion there ; he discovers on inquiry that his wife has been saving up to buy that

[1] But whereas the meaning of a particular series of flashes in the Morse code system is constant, God's symbols (*e.g.* a sunset) may convey one word of God to one man, another to another.

cushion for him, and ever after that the value of the cushion to him is not the comfort that it brings, though he is not insensible to that, but rather it is that which the cushion represents, namely the self-denying love and care of his wife for him ; the cushion is henceforth sacred for him as was to David the water they brought to him at peril of their lives from Bethlehem. Many people wear a little ornament that looks bright and pretty upon their finger and that has a real value of its own ; yet would they never think of parting with it nor ever appraise its value at its money's worth or for its decorative appearance. It is precious beyond all other things for that of which it speaks ; it is your husband's or

> your wife's first gift ;
> A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
> And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
> I gave my love a ring.

In the same way we can take our daily bread as a matter of course, it will be serviceable to us and even pleasant ; but when we realise that it is a gift from a Father and that it stands for his endless love and care, then the daily bread is sacramental ; its value lies not so much in what it is as in what it stands for ; in other words, we have read the Morse code message, we have seen the meaning of it.

Similarly if a man's allotment does well, he may say it is all due to the weather or to that splendid artificial manure that he put in or to his hard spade work or to a paternal government or to the remarkable absence of starlings or slugs or other pest ; and indeed his success may in part be due to all these things ; but after all it is God that giveth the increase, and a man only faces the reality of his

allotment when he finds the Fatherly hand of God in it.

> Lord, 'tis thy plenty-dropping hand
> That soils my land;
> And giv'st me for my bushel sown
> Twice ten for one.

So in every detail of life, in garden or in kitchen or in workshop or in library, through every event that comes to us God speaks. If some one is careless in the kitchen and burns the porridge and spoils my breakfast, I may not make God responsible for this mishap, but I can remember with Mark Tapley that there is no credit in being cheerful when everything goes smoothly, and I can hear God's call to me to turn the mishap to a glorious issue by the way that I respond to it.

> A man that looks on glass,
> On it may stay his eye;
> Or if he pleaseth, through it pass,
> And then the heaven espy.
>
> All may of thee partake:
> Nothing can be so mean
> Which with this tincture, "for thy sake,"
> Will not grow bright and clean.
>
> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine;
> Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
> Makes that and the action fine.

"Ours is to be the blessedness of the prophet, the man of all men most determined to see 'the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living,' to let no event go till it blessed him, to suffer no

wrong to alienate him either from peace or service. . . . But if God's dealing with us, even as man's, is through the world and society, through a moral intercourse whereby we obtain mastery in our whole self-conscious world, our fellowship with the Father is verified by our position in his household, which the world becomes for us as we lay hold of its true order, abandon all thought of explaining it by pleasure and possession, and learn to judge it by discipline and duty, and find thereby that we too are masters in it as in our own world. Only by that victory can we be justified in the confidence that we are not deluded, but have laid hold of life's real and victorious secret, when we deal with it through a personal God, without whose moral will it is all vanity and vexation of spirit." [1]

Religion is the right attitude to God in life and to the brethren in the midst of whom we are set; the religious man is distinguished from the irreligious not by the profession of faith which he makes with his lips, but by his having the right attitude to his brother. "My brothers, what is the use of any one declaring he has faith, if he has no deeds to show? Can his faith save him? Suppose some brother or sister is ill-clad and short of daily food; if any of you say to them, 'Depart in peace! Get warm, get food,' without supplying their bodily needs, what use is that?" [2] Of this let one illustration suffice. When the Income Tax paper comes round, some men are vexed and indignant that they have to pay so much; the demand is a villainous exaction in their eyes, and they will seek out any crooked ingenious device whereby they may evade payment

[1] J. Oman, *op. cit.*, 2nd ed., pp. 112–14.

[2] James ii. 14–16 (Moffatt's translation).

without being liable to prosecution. Others (but how few!) bethink them, "This is what the community asks of me for the service of myself and of my neighbours; all my worldly goods I owe to the protection and the help and the co-operation of my fellows; glad am I to pay this, and glad that I shall still have somewhat over that I may give to others who are in need." Thus a similar paper comes to all alike, but by their different reaction to a common experience some men show themselves to be religious and others irreligious.

Now God does not arrange what the Income Tax paper shall demand of us; that depends upon the general state of national prosperity, the wisdom or foolishness of statesmen and many other things; but one man finds God's call to service and to cheerful giving in it, and another finds a nuisance, an infliction, something by all means to be escaped. Thus it has been wisely and profoundly said, "Where you have the right attitude to life, everything is Providential." Thus we are not to suppose that God inflicts upon us all the unpleasant things and the annoying things that happen to us, but every situation in which we find ourselves involves, if we will see it so, a vocation or call in the fulfilment of which we are in touch with God and are children in our Father's house.

But the question will arise: Is it not true that God sends punishments upon us, does he not send the sick headache after the debauch, does he not visit men's sins upon their bodies, is it not a law of his world that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"? This is true indeed, but the truth of it is often misrepresented. A boy on his way home is decoyed by a friend into the public-

house; he tastes liquor for the first time and gets drunk; he wakes up next morning with a splitting headache. If, as is often suggested, there is a kind of fatalism in wrong-doing, this fall will make the next fall easier; the boy is starting down the slippery slope, and he will become a confirmed drunkard. So no doubt it may be; but so it may not be; for perhaps that headache will bring the boy to his senses, he will look back on what has happened with infinite shame and disgust, and for what has happened he will be ten times more on his guard in future. It all depends on how he takes his headache. We see therefore how misleading it is to speak of God as inflicting a headache as a punishment; the headache comes in the natural order of things which God has ordained, but if the boy so read it, it will be God's very message to him to turn again, not a punishment but a means of grace. So there is no experience in life, neither a sharp reminder of this kind nor a profound religious impression, which will not be, according as a man responds to it, "a savour of life unto life," or "a savour of death unto death." [1]

Wyclif makes a useful distinction between God's "granting" and his "giving." [2] He quotes St. Augustine as saying that to the believer the whole world of riches belongs, but to the unbeliever not a farthing; [3] God *grants* sun and rain, seedtime and harvest to just and unjust, but, he argues, God

[1] For a more philosophical treatment of the problem of "Providence" see *Reconciliation and Reality*, by Prof. W. F. Halliday (the Swarthmore Press), chh. vi. and vii.; and my book, *The Open Light*, pp. 61–102.

[2] The distinction between *dacio* and *donacio*, *de Civ. Dom.*, 3c.

[3] *Ib.*, 2b.

only *gives* these to those who make right use of them. "So God loves his enemies, but strictly he gives them nothing while they are such."[1] Indeed, we may add, God can give them nothing, for they pervert the use of everything and miss its meaning. For them that love God all things work together for good, but apart from the realisation of God's purpose human history seems but a dreadful nightmare, meaningless and ghastly, and what is man more

> Than is the sheep, that rouketh in the folde ?
> For slayn is man right as another beste,
> And dwelleth eek in prison and areste,
> And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
> And ofte tymes giltiless, pardee !

According to the theologians a sacrament is an act, the sprinkling of water or the breaking of bread, in which God and man meet. But the whole of life is either meaningless or, if we will have it so, sacramental ;[2] for in everything we may meet with God, and in this discovery lies all true religion and all human blessedness.

> Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush aflame with God ;
> But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
> The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.

[1] *Ib.* 3c. Indeed this whole doctrine of the understanding and misunderstanding of experience seems but an elaboration and development of what Wyclif taught: "Et iterum notum est si non sit possibile iniustum uti aliquo nisi eo ipso iniuste utatur vel pocius abutatur, per idem non est possibile iniustum alicui dominari nisi, ut sic, iniuste dominetur vel potius tiranniset, cum iniuste extorquet et occupat aliena" (*Ib.* 2a).

[2] This is not to deny that there is a legitimate place for "sacraments" in church worship.

"Luther once said that God might have made a sacrament of a bit of stick, had he chosen; Pusey repeated the saying to a friend with a shudder, telling him that it showed an irreverent mind. Yet surely Luther's words convey the very key to the understanding the truth of the Real Presence, which may be revealed without outward form, or under innumerable forms, just because God is so much nearer than we think, ever at work in his world —still disclosing himself to those who seek with a humble heart, even though they call him not by his name. What we need above all is the spirit which will fill our lives with such sacraments, revelations of God to us and to our fellows. Sometimes we may be helped by an ancient usage of the Church, at others by some new symbol: what matter the shape of the chalice if the wine be there?"[1]

IV. On Being Misunderstood at Home

If you open a Roman Catholic manual of devotion, you are likely to find the name of Mary there as often as the name of Christ. A famous Roman doctor and "saint," Alphonso de Liguori, says, "Mary is our life, because she obtains for us the gifts of pardon . . . and of perseverance"; "Mary is the hope of all"; "Mary is the peacemaker of sinners with God." It is worth while to dwell upon this for a moment; the explanation of it is not far to seek and is very illuminating in connection with the perversion of religion. In the beginning

[1] *A Wayfarer's Faith*, by T. E. Harvey (Wells Gardner, Darton & Co.) pp. 76, 77. The whole chapter is well worth consideration.

Christianity was the glad discovery of God in life; but very soon there crept in the idea that religion is the right attitude to a theological system, and quickly the Carpenter of Nazareth, the "Jesus of History," became the remote "Christ" of speculation and theology; men were concerned about him as "the second Person of the Trinity," as being "of one substance with the Father," and their controversies gathered not about the question what he stood for in human life, but whether he was really a human being or an angel or an "emanation" of the Godhead; thus the human face, the real Jesus, and what he had stood for, were speedily forgotten. But men could not really live on bare speculations; and therefore when Christ had been removed, as it were, from the home to the theological college, religious imagination gathered round Mary and ascribed to her much that they ought to have ascribed to Jesus.[1] But so far from justifying such an attitude to Mary and such a thought of her, the New Testament itself seems almost to go out of its way to explain that, for all her prayers and expectations, she did not really understand her son; his mother as well as his brothers did not "believe on him"; and we must realise that part of the Cross which Jesus had to bear was that he, like his disciples, had to forsake mother and home, and had, as he said, to "hate" father and mother, yes, and

[1] All over the Græco-Roman civilisation was the cult of *mater deum*, the mother of the gods; within the semi-pagan Church the *mater deum* becomes *mater Dei*, "Mother of God," and the properties and attributes of "the mother of the gods" are transferred to Mary. "It is interesting to note," says Dr. T. R. Glover (*Conflict of Religions*, p. 21), "that the land which introduced the mother of the gods to the Roman world also gave the name θεοτόκος (Mother of God) to the church."

" his own soul also," [1] for the sake of the Gospel. If only his mother had stood by him through those lonely years ; if only she had been what tradition would make out ! We can imagine the heart-sickness which were his when he said that whoever does God's will is his mother and sister and brother. And if any in these later days have to go through that most grievous experience of being unhappy and misunderstood at home, it will be a comfort to know that here also " we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but one that was tempted in all points like as we are."

How did he deal with this tragic situation ? His mother had not helped him ; she had made his work much harder for him ; she had tried to prevent it ; she had publicly let it be known that she thought him crazy ; she had almost been his enemy. She had failed to understand but she had not ceased to love her eldest son. And his love did not fail for her. The writers of our Gospels are not interested in the relation of Jesus to his mother, and much remains obscure. But whereas at the beginning of his ministry Mary sought to restrain him, at the end it appears that she came up to Jerusalem amongst his followers ; she was with him at the last and was in the company of those who believed on him after the Resurrection ; so it appears that while he was still on earth she came to understand and was reconciled, and as he hung there upon the Cross he commended her to the loving care of John.[2]

[1] This phrase indicates how his own heart was torn by the misunderstanding and estrangement.

[2] There is no sufficient reason to doubt this in spite of the famous comment, " c'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas histoire."

V. "Divinest when thou most art Man"

Many people never understand Christianity and many are permanently alienated from it because they approach it from an impossible angle. They start with a dogma that Jesus was an omnipotent and omniscient Being, God in fact, though in some unintelligible sense he was man too, that he had "two natures," a human and a divine, and that in his earthly ministry he was subject to a dual consciousness, even something akin to what the medical man calls a "dissociation," so that he sometimes spoke and acted as God, sometimes as man. The "two natures" doctrine is to us not only obscure but inconceivable, and it dates from the time when personality and what it involves was little understood. We cannot think of God as a boy, nor can we make sense of the home life at Nazareth if Jesus was an omniscient and omnipotent Being. These doctrines do not really do justice even to our own religious sense, for strictly there is nothing worshipful in great strength and great knowledge. Great strength can be used for evil purposes, and great knowledge can be prostituted to vile ends, as war has shown; we really worship God therefore not for his strength and wisdom, but because we believe that all his might and wisdom are exercised in the ways of love and of redemption; we worship him then, not for his overwhelming power, but for his love and patience. If we worship Jesus and call him divine, it should be not because he is a mysterious being whom we cannot understand and of whom we are in our heart of hearts a little afraid, or from whom we would seek some favour

for ourselves and our friends, but for his human heart of love and because he *was* love; it is because he was love that he perfectly reflects and images the Father, and it is because he is love that he wins our worship and is the perfect man, for love is the meaning of man's nature and all breaches of love are wrongs to our human nature. It is because we do not see Jesus as a human being that we miss his true divinity, "Jesus, divinest when thou most art man."

If we can imagine for a moment that there should one day be dug up in Palestine some old yoke which from the trade mark upon it men knew to have been made by Jesus, well we know that from the ends of the earth men would go as on a sacred pilgrimage to see it; they would well-nigh worship it. And yet there is nothing sacred in mere wood; its value would lie not in what it was in itself, but in that of which it was the symbol, namely human love divine. But many would traverse the earth to see this yoke, as they travel to see some alleged splinter from his Cross, who in their hearts do not reverence love, for they do not live for love nor recognise it in their homes. We are not called to worship the symbol but the reality, and to worship Christ and his love by standing ourselves for love in the common ways of life and "hating all that hinders love" and being, even as Jesus was, the friend of all and the enemy of none. Thus shall we find that he dwells no more at Nazareth but by our side and in our homes. He who walks by love himself will never doubt that Jesus of Nazareth is one with God, or that God is love.

CHAPTER II

JESUS AS HEALER

He shall be to thee like the sea,
And thou shalt surely feel
His wind that bloweth healthily
Thy sicknesses to heal.

T. T. LYNCH

I. Methods of Healing

If we could turn to the simple people in Capernaum and ask them what impression Jesus of Nazareth made upon them when he lived in their midst, it is almost certain that one thing they would mention in their reminiscences would be that he was a great healer, a doctor to whom the poorest might turn, a doctor who charged no fees.

No reasonable critic any more denies that Jesus did what were regarded as " miracles " of healing ; but in the light of what has been said above, we shall expect that if Jesus did these he did them, not in virtue of some mysterious omnipotence denied to all others, but in virtue of his true humanity. This is indeed borne out by the New Testament itself, for not only is there recorded a promise that his followers shall do " greater works than these," but also there is no doubt that he sent his disciples out as healers and that they were successful in this task. It behoves us then to ask : How did he heal

and under what conditions? It has been popularly supposed that his miracles were performed with a mere word or that "he ne'er lift up his hand but conquerëd"; and it has therefore been argued that his followers should forswear the help of doctors and "unspiritual" methods and trust to "spiritual" means only. But in the thought of Jesus this world is the Father's; therefore the laws of God's world which the doctor uses cannot be unspiritual. Further, it would be hazardous to assert that Jesus himself employed no means but those of a word or touch; he used spittle in the healing of the blind; his disciples, following, presumably, the Master's practice and the traditions of the day, anointed the sick with oil. More than that, speech and touch are quite as much means as quinine or opium. Further, what case would the Pharisees have had against him for desecrating the Sabbath day, if his cures had been entirely effortless? They accused him of *working* on the Sabbath. The fact that in most cases he seems to have used no outward means beyond speech or a touch does not indicate that he refused or despised other means of help available in any case. But it is plain that we cannot fully understand Christ's miracles of healing apart from his teaching as to prayer. "This kind," he said, "goeth not out but by prayer." The teaching about prayer and the "miracles" so dovetail into one another and so explain one another, that it is difficult to think they can be treated separately.[1]

We may take as an interesting but obscure illustration of Christ's methods the story of the Gerasene demoniac. We must attempt to reconstruct the

[1] *Cp.* Dr. Cairn's second address in *Lake Mohonk Conference* (Student Christian Movement).

scene as best we can. For unknown reasons Jesus has crossed over to the east side of the sea of Galilee; the party lands at a place where the cliff near-by falls sheer into the sea; amongst rocky caves that have been used as tombs Jesus is met by a well-known lunatic whom, when his raving fits are on him, no bonds and fetters will hold. He suffers from the delusion that he is possessed by a number of evil spirits. The cause of his insanity seems to be some fear which has overwhelmed him and driven him out of his mind.[1] Its form is instructive; by a not unfamiliar transference he supposes himself to be, or to be possessed by, that which, as a Jew or a pagan Syrian, is most his detestation, namely, the Roman domination; he is, or is possessed by, "Legion." We cannot tell what is the association in his mind between the legionaries and the ultimate "fear-complex"[2]; as he believes himself possessed by evil spirits, it is natural that he goes to live in the wilderness among the tombs; for in the popular mind there was a close connection between evil spirits and the ghosts of the departed. Here he lives, naked and alone, possessed with superhuman strength and gashing himself with stones when the frenzy is on him. It is a clear case of insanity, and under modern conditions such a man would be put under forcible restraint. How does Jesus treat a case of this kind? He does not heal the man with a word or by magic, but, as is plain in spite of much that is obscure in the story, by methods which in our day are regarded as strictly scientific. We cannot tell in what condition the man was

[1] Mark v. 7, "torment me not."

[2] In all likelihood the legionaries were not themselves the object of fear; they are a symbol.

when he came up to Jesus; but Jesus diagnosed his case at a glance and at once got into conversation with him. Only scraps of that conversation can we hear at this distance of time.[1] But when the man "cries out," saying, "What have I to do with you, God's Son?" it is fairly plain that Jesus has been speaking about God, and also that the notion of a possible cure has already been suggested to the patient. Mark adds that Jesus had been saying to him, "Come out, unclean spirit." When Jesus asks and receives "the name," the battle is almost won; for in the thought of the time to have the name of a demon was to have the power over it, and the patient was conquered in principle already when he surrendered the name. As soon as the name is out, there begins a queer dialogue in which the man representing his "demons" tries to compromise: "Do not send us away from the tombs; may we go into the pigs?"

This raises in our minds the problem, what did happen to the pigs? Did Jesus really tell demons to go into pigs, and did he thus destroy all the pigs and involve his neighbours in a serious loss of property?[2] We cannot be quite sure what happened; but it appears that in many similar cases the insanity came to a crisis before the patient was completely cured. So it may have been in this

[1] It is a mistake to suppose that the patient immediately recognised Jesus as "Son of God Most High." It is apparent from Mark v. 8 that he only said this because Jesus "was saying," *i.e.* was saying repeatedly to the demon, "Come out." Presumably the man learnt Jesus' name either from Jesus himself or from the crowd.

[2] There is no reason for supposing that the pigs belonged to Jews who should not have had the unclean animals, nor was this Jesus' drastic way with wrongdoers!

case; we may perhaps picture the man rushing off waving his arms and crying aloud; the terrified pigs scramble off in alarm and tumble over the edge of the cliff.[1] The man readily believes that the demons have left him now, and according to his faith so it is unto him.[2] He comes back himself once again, realises his nakedness, is given a cloak, and is sitting at Jesus' feet when the villagers come out to see the wonder.[3] In some such way as this we may seek to reconstruct the scene. The details are uncertain, but in the main it is clear that in this case of acute insanity Jesus effects a cure by quieting the man, talking to him, suggesting to him who God is and therefore that recovery is possible; with the authority which is born of insight into human nature and assurance of divine grace, he commands the evil spirit to go; he wins the confidence of the patient to himself and through himself to God, and the cure is effected.

We sometimes think of demon-possession as a distinctively Oriental malady, and so in some of its symptoms it may be, but not in its essence. There are many men and women in our midst who are certainly going out of their minds and are on the straight road to the lunatic asylum because of some fear or some unresolved problem which they are trying to keep from them. There are many more

[1] I am informed that farmers will never have flocks or herds under the care of the village idiot, even though he appear competent for the task. Animals seem to be instinctively aware of madness and to be afraid of a madman.

[2] So Joh. Weiss in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*.

[3] If this reconstruction of the scene is approximately correct, the patient comes twice to Jesus, first when the "treatment" begins, and second when he returns completely healed. It was probably at this second coming that he "worships" Jesus, Mark v. 6.

who are chronic "invalids," neurotics, hysterics, because they have some problem which they will not face. Many men are living a double life, one at home or in the Church, the other in business; they cannot make a harmony of their ideals and their practice; they are not prepared to pay the price of making a harmony between conduct and ideal; there are other persons who are trying to live as if there were no such thing in the world as sex, or to suppress out of their consciousness painful experiences of unfulfilled hopes; there are others who have some sin or mistake upon their conscience, which for the consequences it might bring upon them they dare not confess to others nor face in their own lives; they drive it underground into the "sub-conscious," but there it festers and revenges itself upon them, and while all such persons do not go insane in the same obvious way as this poor demoniac, they are on the high road to insanity, and there is no health for them, neither of body nor of mind. Now in all these cases it is plain that drugs and hypnotism and electricity are of little avail in themselves; the need is a religious one. Men and women have been saved from madness because some one has come to them in the spirit of Jesus and has enabled them to determine to do the right thing now relative to the wrong thing done once, though it mean social ostracism and contempt or financial ruin; or who has enabled them to see that the meaning of sex is spiritual not physical, and so they have come to face their problem and to find reconciliation to their lot, not by pretending that sex has nothing to do with them, but by finding God's will relative to their situation; or who has shown them that in God's world there

is nothing they need to fear because they have entered into an eternal order where God is by their side, and they can turn all things to good. In God's order there is no salvation, no health of body, no peace of mind, no satisfaction of spirit apart from a facing of reality and a discovery of God in life.[1]

II. Worry and Disease

It must be borne in mind that illnesses are of two kinds, either (to use for a moment scientific terminology) *pathogenic* or *ideogenic*; the former result from an injury to or defect in some bodily organ; the latter are in the last resort due to an idea, a fear or other repressed emotional conflict which has affected the functions and health of the body.[2] Thus the cause of illness may be either a physical injury or an emotional conflict; the body may be sick or the mind may be sick; often the same effects may be due to either of these causes, and only the most careful medical analysis can detect which is the true cause. Thus the shell-shock hospitals are full of men who are paralysed in arms or legs, of men who have their faces horribly distorted, of men who are blind and deaf and dumb,

[1] "What alienated me once for all from this relatively efficacious indirect method of suggestion, based as it is upon an equally efficacious false theory, was the perception I obtained at the same time that, behind the confused deceptive intricacies of neurotic phantasies, there stands a *conflict*, which may best be described as a *moral* one" (Jung, *Analytical Psychology*, p. 242).

[2] Because the psychic energy or *libido* instead of finding healthy and normal expression is withdrawn to effect a suppression to help the self not to recognise a conflict which is existent. Nature will not help a compromise!

not because any injury has been done to their bodies, but simply owing to "shock."[1] Again, our lunatic asylums are full of people whose brains seem to show no structural injury, but who are insane because of some repressed emotional struggle;[2] the origin of all these troubles is mental or spiritual, not physical. There are people everywhere suffering from every sort of dyspepsia, from something which in symptom is indistinguishable from *angina pectoris*, from forms of asthma, from pains and swellings and manifold troubles and fears and nervousnesses; and ultimately the cause of all these illnesses is not physical, but psychic or spiritual; they are due not to a bad constitution nor to the attack of a germ nor to contagion but to a wrong state of the nerves which is itself caused by worry, which again involves a wrong relation to things, to life and to experience; thus their cure is at bottom a religious problem.

It is not at all possible within the narrow limits of this book to go into all the recorded miracles of Jesus nor to discuss the problems raised by some of them, but it may be said with great confidence that many of them, and probably most of them, were cases of "nervous" illness of this kind;[3] and while we must suppose that if he cured other types of disease his followers should have similar powers, this question of the healing of what we may call

[1] *Cp.* Seale Hayne, *Neurological Studies* (Oxford Press): "Shell-shock" is the popular term for the cause of these illnesses; but it may be doubted whether a *shock* is the real cause: *cf.* Freud, *Zur Psychoanalyse der Kriegsneurosen*, 1919.

[2] *Cp.* Jung. *op. cit.*, ch. xiii.

[3] See further *Miracles and the New Psychology*, by E. R. Micklem, M.A., B.Litt., to be published shortly.

worry-diseases or illnesses due to unsolved problems deserves much more of the attention of Christian people than it has generally received.

But we need not concern ourselves primarily with cases of developed illness; we all know people who are cross and irritable and depressed and constantly complaining of "that tired feeling"; it is likely enough that in time these troubles will develop into real illness; they certainly predispose to illness; but long before that they make people a burden to themselves and to others. It is possible that we have noticed ladies who are far too tired to walk or to do house-work, who yet are able to dance all night, or gentlemen whose sorrows are halved and whose joys are doubled when they light a good cigar; it is not unlikely that we ourselves know what it is to lie in bed feeling weak and depressed and tired of life and thinking that we shall never get well again, and there comes a pleasant budget of letters or a visit from a friend or even a kindly word or an unexpected kindly deed, and we feel quite different about everything. It is true we were out of sorts, but in reality half our troubles were mental.[1] We were at cross purposes with things; we were looking at things, as we say, with a jaundiced eye; our attitude to life was wrong. Now salvation is to have the right attitude to life, and that is why there is a most intimate connection between religion and physical health.[2] It is probably no exaggeration to say that half our illnesses

[1] *Cp.* Dr. J. A. Hadfield's chapter on "The Psychology of Power" in the volume entitled *The Spirit*, edited by Dr. B. H. Streeter, and *The Psychic Treatment of Nervous Disorders*, by Dubois.

[2] The Christian Scientists (so-called) are right so far, though their theory is untenable.

would never come, and half the burden of the rest would be taken away, if we were able to realise that we are children in a Father's house, that we are not forsaken, nor is God angry with us, but is speaking to us and commending his great love to us even through our trouble, if only we will listen to his voice.

In all these cases mentioned above the body is sick because the soul is sick, and the body is only healed when the soul is healed.[1]

In so far as the health of the body depends on the health of the mind, it is the duty of a Christian to be healthy. Whether or not we are so depends again very largely upon our prayer life. If we tumble out of bed in the morning cross and tired and irritable and a trifle late, we start badly, and everything goes wrong throughout the day; that is to say, we take everything wrong. But if we have spent but a few minutes in prayer, if we have reminded ourselves in God's presence that we are tired and that things will be difficult for us, if we have waited to spread out the day with its duties and temptations and opportunities so far as these can be foreseen, if we have made an effort to look at the day in the right way, thinking not of our own pleasure but of the needs of those whom we are to meet during the day, if we have remembered that in everything, big or little, we may be in touch with God, that this life is the discipline which a Father appoints and in the right attitude to which lies our blessedness, and that every experience is also a

[1] A very important and not unduly technical modern book on the subject is *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*, Baudouin (E. T., Geo. Allen & Unwin).

vocation and an opportunity—then truly we are able to greet the day "with a cheer" and with a zest; we have been delivered from the old bondage to transient moods and unwelcome duties, and have taken upon us a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light. Our first duty, then, is to be cheerful and in good spirits and at peace, even in bustle and in weariness.

> A principal part of charitie
> Is merrie to be.

There are some people who, as we say, "make us feel better" by their very presence; in so far as we are truly religious people we ourselves must be such; we must be health-bringers. It is a monstrous travesty of the religious life to suppose that it involves a long face and a resigned expression; not resignation but reconciliation is the mark of the religious man, and this kind of healing by the spirit in which we live is a task we cannot leave to the professional doctors alone.[1] We must be like Ignatius who was called Theophoros because wherever he went he seemed to bring God with him.

As typical of Jesus' attitude in such cases let us

[1] I have spoken here as if a neurosis was always due to a wrong attitude to life in the consciousness of the sick person. I am well aware that this is an undue simplification of the problem, and that not only the conscious but the so-called sub-conscious has to be rightly adjusted to reality. In some cases, no doubt, a psycho-therapist's help is necessary, but these hidden conflicts or morbid complexes tend to be automatically resolved when the sufferer (to use an old expression) is "soundly converted." By conversion is meant the shifting of the centre of interest from the self to "Christ"; the term "Christ" here covers all that Jesus stood for, a new attitude to God and man and self and experience. Jesus effects the true psycho-synthesis. See next chapter.

take a single illustration. There was a man in Capernaum who for many years had been paralysed; the case would in these days perhaps be diagnosed as an hysterical paralysis; the sufferer himself looked upon his trouble as the direct infliction of an angry God. Hearing of the great Healer, this man's friends wanted to take him to Jesus to see if he could do him any good. Perhaps they did not know the real facts of the case, which become plain in the sequel, namely that, bitter as it was to be thus paralysed and laid aside, the real bitterness of his life was spiritual; there was some secret lying upon his conscience, there was an appalling sense of the enmity of God. It is quite possible that his paralysis was directly due to some sin working through auto-suggestion; but in any case no deliverance from the physical ill would meet his deepest need. So he thanked his friends and said he was quite willing to let the Healer do anything that he could. They found Jesus at home in the little house where he lived; but it was crowded with people who had come to talk with him and to hear him, and there was no chance of getting the sick man inside. Presently a scrabbling is heard on the roof, and the patient is let down on to the floor just at the feet of Jesus. There he lies looking up, and as Jesus looks down into his sad and wistful eyes he reads his very heart,[1] and fixing his gaze upon him he says, "Cheer up, my son, your sins are forgiven you." And there, apparently, apart from an accidental circumstance the story might have ended. That was the word that the sick man above all things longed to hear, and hearing it and believing it he forgot, at least for

[1] In the Synoptic narratives the forgiveness is somewhat strangely ascribed to the faith of the patient's friends.

the moment, all about the paralysis and the weakness. The sequel comes as a kind of afterthought, due to the protest of the scribes and Pharisees, "Arise, take up your stretcher and go home." The most remarkable thing in the story is that when Jesus says to the man, "Your sins are forgiven you," the man believes it; he had never been able to believe that God would really forgive his sin; he thought God's justice consisted in "making the punishment fit the crime"; but when he looked into the eyes of Jesus, or rather when he looked into the soul of Jesus, he could not doubt that God loves and forgives. Jesus, not because of any metaphysical qualities nor capricious powers but because of what he was in his own soul, could bring God near to men and make his goodness credible.

III. Preventive Medicine

Modern medicine is largely divided into two branches: there is the healing of those who are sick, and there is the prevention of sickness before it come to pass. In the short and private ministry of Jesus there was little or no place for the latter; but we cannot doubt that it is better to prevent an ox from falling into a pit by putting up a hurdle than to pull the ox out when it has fallen in. We should remember that preventive medicine, the work of public health departments, the social and political work which serves to improve conditions and thus take away the occasions of disease, is an essentially Christian service, and those who engage in such work are free to feel that they are truly carrying on the healing ministry of Jesus. People are far too apt to take up an entirely wrong and

indeed quasi-blasphemous attitude to the incidence of disease; we should ascribe pestilences not after the mediæval or Moslem style to the will of an angry God but to bad drains or the infamous slums we still tolerate,

> Whose filth and dirt
> Trouble the silver spring where England drinks.

Ill thoughts leading to ill conditions and involving illness and disease are part of that "kingdom of Satan" which Jesus came to destroy; the kingdom of Satan is that world of false ideas of God, false ideas of our neighbour, under which the majority of men still lie; for to this day the world lieth in the evil one. The kingdom of Satan represents all unreality and false judgment and perversion of man's true nature, and is thus the opposite of the "Kingdom of God."

But while it is good to remember that preventive medicine and public health work can do much, we deceive ourselves if we suppose that we can banish pain from the world without also banishing sin. Three of the greatest scourges of modern society are consumption, venereal disease and drunkenness; it is quite true that by legislation and still more by the creation of better social conditions and opportunities in life much can be done to mitigate and reduce these ills, but ultimately it is plain that they all are rooted in a wrong attitude to life and to one's neighbour, and that they can never be eliminated until the evil will is eliminated from the hearts of men. There is no ultimate separation between medicine and politics and religion. Jesus came to heal men altogether.

IV. "The Angel of Pain"

At this moment and for years to come, as far as we can see, there will be suffering for most as the result of their own ignorance and folly in the past or the ignorance and folly of others. What is the religious attitude to such suffering? The answer is that, where men find God in their suffering, it becomes a different thing, transfigured, not good in itself but the means of good. It will be remembered that we said in the first chapter that experience is, as it were, a Morse code through which God is seeking to speak to us and to come into contact with us. So every suffering that befalls us may be made a peculiar "means of grace" or spiritual advantage. Let us take as an extreme illustration the death of Christ. We shall discuss in a later chapter why and in what sense it was "necessary" for Jesus to die as he did; but we may say here that though the death of Jesus on the Cross was due to the sin and blindness of men, yet by the way in which he took it, by the spirit in which he died, he was able to turn the tragedy and the infamy into the world's great glory; it was when human hate and human wickedness were doing their worst, that Jesus could manifest a love stronger than all hate, a love which neither suffering nor sin could quench. Because of the soul revealed there, its purity, its peace, its love, bringing assurance of God's attitude to sinful man, the Cross which seemed at first to be the symbol of the dark night of the world has become the symbol of the world's salvation. Events or experiences are in themselves meaningless, their value and meaning derive from the souls of those

who participate and who receive.[1] Thus we are able to see how the Cross which properly might be taken as the symbol of Roman "frightfulness" and Jewish apostasy has become the symbol of love made perfect and the salvation of men, not because of its physical sufferings nor because of some strange cosmic transaction thereby effected, but because of the soul that was revealed there.

> Blest Cross, blest Sepulchre, blest rather be
> The Man that there was put to shame for me.

In the same way all human suffering, by the way we bear it, may become for us and others as the very gateway of heaven.[2] Let me take a modern illustration of this. When the news came to parents that their boy had been killed by the Germans in the war, some said, "Well, I hope there will be twenty Germans killed to avenge my boy," and much more to the same effect, and those parents' hearts were yet more filled with hatred and bitterness because of what had happened; it made peace or thoughts of peace most difficult, and it was all intelligible enough. There were other parents who, when the same news came to them, said rather that as for them they could not bear to think that they were inflicting this kind of awful sufferings on others, that they could not wish that any German home should have to suffer thus for what had happened to their boy, and that as soon as may be peace must be sought and a new and better way of

[1] See *infra*, pp. 70 ff. For a fuller treatment of this difficult but vital theme I would refer to W. F. Halliday, *op. cit.*, pp. 188, 204, 206 ff.

[2] Cf. *The Paradox of the World*, by Dr. Oman, pp. 110 ff (Cambridge Press).

settling our affairs; and so the suffering that came to them did not harden but rather softened their hearts and brought God nearer. Those different parents lived in different worlds. The especial importance of this illustration is, that it will be peculiarly the work of those who have lost sons or lovers to determine whether there shall be reconciliation after the war or a continuance of hatred; if those who have lost so much cherish malice and revenge it is difficult to see how there can ever be a Christian peace, but if those who have lost so much will put away hatred and malice they will be able to create a new world wherein shall dwell both righteousness and brotherhood. It is they who live under the power of the spirit of Jesus who in these distracted times shall be for the healing of the nations.

CHAPTER III

JESUS AS FRIEND

Our chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do what we can. This is the service of a friend. With him we are easily great. There is a sublime attraction in him to whatever virtue there is in us. How he flings open the door of existence! What questions we ask of him! What an understanding we have! How few words are needed! It is the only real society. A real friend doubles my possibilities and adds his strength to mine, and makes a well-nigh irresistible force possible to me.—R. W. EMERSON

I. The Great Human Need

Religion comes to meet a human need. From the earliest times man has felt himself in the grip of strange, mysterious powers outside himself, from bondage to which and the fear of which he sought for freedom. In the primitive religions these powers have been thought of as the spirits of places or trees or as the evil demons of plague and pestilence. In philosophic Hinduism and Buddhism man seeks to be delivered from the endless round of change and from bondage to a material body. Persisting through many generations, from early Babylon to the India of to-day, is the widespread belief that human events are ordered and determined by the stars. In the days when Christianity came out into the Græco-Roman world, there were many religions offering, through blood or sacrament or mystic

initiation, salvation and deliverance from the bondage of mortality. Fatalism and pessimism take different forms amongst ourselves; but it was a common superstition in the army that a man's life was safe until he met the bullet with his number on it, and it is amongst us a popular creed, supported by a kind of science, that man is at the mercy of environment and of heredity. Behind all these forms and doctrines there is man's universal sense that the ocean of things is large, and his boat is small and none too water-tight; there is the yearning of the human spirit for shelter, for deliverance, for a free, unfettered life over which change and death shall not hang as sullen spectres. Every religion addresses itself to this primal need; every religion offers some salvation.

Writers on religion have often elucidated from the Bible the nature of that salvation which Christianity offers. We will begin from the other end, and ask ourselves, as morally serious persons, what is that salvation which we should desire to have if we could have it, and approach the problem of religion from the angle of our human need.

(1) First, every morally serious man desires to be a man in the fullest sense of which he is capable. It may be that the present age does not suffer from any acute sense of sin; at the same time, no man who has seen an ideal of what character can be believes himself to have attained to his ideal; while he may be conscious of many good motives that actuate him, he is conscious of evil motives too which lead to his basest actions and often poison his best.

"Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine

elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste—well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well'; 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well': to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run."

Let this stand for man's perennial conflict. For man has been well defined[1] as "a discontented

[1] In that very penetrating book, *The Way to Personality*, by G. B. Robson (Swarthmore Press).

animal," partly because his ideal is beyond his attainment and infinite, partly because he is conscious within himself of many motives drawing him hither and thither, dispersing his energy and distracting him from his main purpose; though he is a person, yet he has to attain to personality, to that inward unity which constitutes a man one with himself. Most men are many persons, a little world in miniature; Philip drunk is a different man from Philip sober; some men are all smiles abroad and all frowns and grumblings at home; the same man may be a miser at one moment and a spendthrift at another. Tennyson bids us "let the ape and tiger die," but in truth most men have within them something of the ape and the tiger, and something of the sheep and of the donkey too, as well as the human or humane being which is their true self.[1]

Of some men, as it would appear, one of these strange creatures has taken complete control, so that we say of such an one, he is a perfect tiger of a man or, it may be, a perfect donkey. To drop the metaphor, a man's whole nature is sometimes unified by the complete dominance of some one desire or set of desires, a personal affection perhaps, as in the case of Romeo, or the love of money, as with Shylock. So it is needful for a personality not only to be unified but to be unified in the pursuit of the highest of which it is capable. Man would be human or humane.

(2) We can go farther; we desire for ourselves

[1] *Cp.* the great judgment scene in Daniel (Daniel vii.), where the ancient Empires come up in forms compacted of diverse beasts; the kingdom of the future is to be "like unto a son of man," human or humane.

fellowship. It is not good for man to be alone, and fellowship for the highest ends is an integral part of our demand of life. We may note in passing, that it is a fellowship of this kind that Jesus calls the kingdom of heaven or, in modern English, heaven on earth.

(3) Third in order here, but not in order of importance, is the desire for fellowship with God. Man is so made with the craving for the infinite in his heart as that, if fellowship with God be impossible, his heart and mind can never be satisfied; man would be at peace, were he at one with God. More than that, primitive man may cry out for shelter and for security in the midst of powers beyond his understanding or control, but we at least, at our stage of man's development, desire with an unutterable longing that the Spirit at the heart of this universe shall prove to be all-beautiful, all-true, all-good and all-worthy of trust, and that we may have fellowship with such a God. If God be not all that, we can never be quite happy. There seems to be an intuition in the heart of civilised men that God must be a Father, and there is a general consent among them that they ought to treat each other brotherly; but just as nothing goes well in a country where there is no confidence in the Government, so nothing can go well in a universe where there is no confidence in "Providence," when, that is, there remains a serious doubt in men's minds whether wisdom demands they should order their lives upon the principle of the "struggle for existence" or the contrary principle of brotherhood. Men would like to act brotherly towards one another and would like to be "children in a Father's house" and to feel that they are set

in the midst of brethren, but they question whether life is possible upon those terms. If man could be at one with God and his neighbour, then might life be, not the transcript of the jungle, as it seems to be to-day, but "one feast, one house, one mutual happiness."

(4) Over all human fellowships lowers the shadow of separation and of "death's dishonourable victory."

> Forty years on when afar and asunder
> Parted are those who are singing to-day—

human fellowship, how good it is! but there is a shadow on the hills; we shall be scattered in the night.

> Man's life is like unto a winter's day,
> Some break their fast and so depart away.
> Others stay dinner, then depart full fed:
> The longest age but sups and goes to bed.

The human heart can never be satisfied unless it can be lifted above the sphere of change and death into the permanent and the eternal.

Let this suffice, then, for the moment as a sketch of that which we would fain have true, that our personality should be unified in the pursuit of noblest ends, that we should be gentle and humane with "the elements so mixed in" us

> that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

further, that we should enjoy the fellowship of kindred spirits, that we should enter into communion with the Eternal and should find in him all beauty, all truth, all goodness, and finally that this our

inheritance should be incorruptible and fading not away.

Man's central need, then, is for atonement, at-one-ment, with himself, with God, with his fellow and with his experience. *It was precisely this need which Jesus set himself to kindle in men's hearts and to satisfy.* But the problem is, how can this at-one-ment be? It is most unduly simplified by those who suppose that, if only the present order of society were overturned, a new and better order would automatically arise, that if only the artificial barriers between man and man, class and class, of education and of circumstance, were removed, all men would be brothers and the kingdom of heaven would be here; for every one is conscious that, in the end, the root of the trouble is not in our circumstances but in ourselves. No doubt we are in some sense free, and no doubt, if we willed it, there is no external compulsion to prevent our living up to our ideal; the failure is in us, and man's trouble is not only blindness to the ideal but, far more, impotence to attain it.

If we will ask ourselves in the light of human experience what power *could* effect this at-one-ment for us, and if we resolutely determine not to use technical theological language, our inevitable reply will be that only a friend who would awaken in us the ideal and stand by us and assure us could save us into this new and larger life.

II. Friendship

It was as a friend after this pattern that Jesus came amongst men. He was so human, so kindly, so approachable, so genial, so sympathetic and

understanding, so gentle and so true; his presence was infinitely reassuring, and there were no frontiers to his interest and love. There were many good-hearted folk in his day as in ours who did good to those who did them good; they had their circle of intimates and associates to whom they were kindness itself; but, after all, their circle was a very narrow one; it ruled out "the common people," who were "accursed," or it ruled out the publicans, with whom no gentleman would mix; it ruled out the outcasts of society, and of course it ruled out the national enemy, the Roman. Thus the human affection of the good people had obvious and straitened limits; but the sheer human interest and affection of Jesus knew no limits; he never talked about the brotherhood of man, but he was everybody's brother. The outcasts in the city were particularly aware of this; true, they did not want to be always with him; their conscience pricked them too keenly in his presence for that; it would mean a revolution within them for which they were not yet prepared; but it was good to know that he was round the corner, that he was there in case of need; for they were instinctively aware that if ever there was any special trouble they could always go to him, and his door was ever on the latch, and there was no one in all the city with whom he would not share his last crust; he would never fail any one who came to him; he would stick closer than a brother, and when all the world should point the finger of scorn at such an one, Jesus would stand by him and befriend him till the very last. Capernaum was glad when "it was noised abroad that he was home" again, not only because he was a doctor, but because he was a neighbour such as all

men would desire to have. True, he never connived at wickedness, he unveiled men to themselves; by his very presence he made them feelingly aware of the inadequacy and futility and wretchedness of the life they were living and of the intellectual and moral world in which they habitually moved; but through all the self-deceptions and subterfuges of men he saw, beneath the mask of indifference or carelessness or satisfaction, the inextinguishable human craving for some one who would really love them and be genuinely interested in them and would stand by them and believe in them when they could scarce believe in themselves.

Then, again, he was welcome because he helped men in the deepest things, and that humanly and lovingly and not professionally as did the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus made God seem real; in his presence God seemed not far away but near and loving beyond all thought. In those days, as in these, men went in terror of the Unseen; they feared the God of Judgment and of Sinai; in illness or accident or trouble they saw the avenging hand of God; the skies above them were sombre and terrible —was God impotent or cruel or inexorably just, or, rather, was he not in reality essentially unjust? We speak to-day in more abstract terms as of heredity and environment and social conditions; but, under whatever name, the human heart cries out for shelter, for a rock on which to stand amid the storms, for a home and an abiding city somewhere, for an assurance that behind all the seeming and the suffering there is a purpose still of good and a human heart of love. The most noticeable thing about the religion of Jesus was that it was unprofessional and perfectly natural; he spoke of the things of which

he was sure, and he made others sure. In his presence the ideal world, the spiritual world, the world of our longings and our highest moments, wherein God is good and life consists in works and thoughts of love, became true and real; he enabled men to live their own highest life. They knew nothing of the magniloquent language of the later creeds about him, but they felt that he was the very embodiment or, as we say, the very incarnation of the goodness and grace and love of God which prophets had affirmed but which the facts of life seemed ever to deny. He made the goodness and the Fatherhood of God seem credible, and thereby, so they would think if they did not put it exactly in this way, he made for them a new heaven and a new earth; he delivered them, at least while they were with him, from their narrow, petty, fearful lives.

The secret of Jesus' power was not some theological omnipotence (which as a matter of fact he did not possess), but the unfathomed power of his own marvellous love [1] and friendship to deliver men from their sins and to kindle in them such a passionate love of those things for which he stood as should burn up within them all lower and inferior desires, that they might be "dead indeed unto sin, but alive

[1] Love, and the love of Jesus in particular, is not sentimentality nor mere emotion. His love is a redemptive identification of himself with every man in his need, his shame and his possibilities. Real love and friendship, therefore, are based on insight and hope, not on transient emotion. The appreciation of this is most important for the understanding of my book, as sentimentality has played far too great a part in religion, and in medical psychology is the outcome of a selfish hysteria which under certain circumstances becomes appallingly cruel. See further *Christ and Cæsar*, by N. Micklem and H. Morgan (Swarthmore Press), ch. vii.

unto God." He saw that there could be no bond of human fellowship sufficient to reconcile Simon the Zealot with Matthew the tax-gatherer except a common devotion to God and his kingdom, which should take them out of themselves and deliver them from themselves. The theology of Jesus was not derived from textbooks, nor was he in any technical sense a theologian. We can only say of him that he was intuitively conscious of God, and knew God to be all-loving, all-redeeming and all-beautiful. As a matter of fact, we can only describe the content of his thought of God by saying that God is the Father of whom he is the Son, that God is eternally what Jesus was in time. He knew God to be seeking fellowship with all mankind; he saw that mankind never could be happy except in union with such a God as he knew God to be; therefore must he be mediator between God and man; he must bring God's love to men. Fellowship with such a God could not be attained apart from a man's own glad consent; therefore neither force nor argument nor rhetoric nor emotionalism could save man, but only a friend who could reveal and could inspire. When men would not have him he could not cease to love; he could not leave them; he must show that, though they do their worst to him, reject, despise and crucify, he loves them still. That is the story of the Cross. And Jesus knew that his attitude to man was also God's. Behind theological language lies hidden the very simple truth that he came offering himself in friendship to all who would have him, to the end that, by ever condemning sin but never despising the sinner, he might lift him into that world in which he lived himself.

The whole " plan of salvation " is to be found in

the story of Zacchæus. This, we may suppose, was the best-hated man in Jericho; and he himself hated the work he had to do and despised himself for doing it, though he was ready enough with excuses when men called him names and shunned his company. All he needed was that some one should make strong in him his true self and should deliver him out of his false world in which self-preservation seemed the only law of life into the real world whose law is service and whose rule is brotherhood. What drew Zacchæus that day to come to see Jesus we cannot tell; but it may have been the work and prompting of his own better self and the dim hope that here was a teacher who perhaps would not despise him as the other teachers did and as in his heart he despised himself. And so it was. When Jesus came to his house, there was, we may imagine, no reference on Jesus' part to the profiteering and the compromises of which Zacchæus was ashamed; and yet Zacchæus felt himself under moral compulsion to confess himself a sinner, for the love and purity of Jesus had unveiled him to himself; it may be he could not bear to think that Jesus should look upon him as an honest man when in his own heart he knew that he was not. But in Jesus Zacchæus had found a friend who would stand by him in spite of all the world's scorn, one indeed who had already risked his popularity with the people near the crisis of his life by inviting himself to dinner at his house. And with such a friend by his side Zacchæus stepped into another world; he came to look at all things in a new light; in other words, he saw things truly and responded to what he saw; so that very day salvation came to his house—for such a new attitude is salvation.

A man is saved when he comes to realise that God is in truth his Father and loves him with a Father's love in spite of all his sin and failure, and that every man is his brother, and that in his Father's house all things, not merely his successes but also what the poet calls "Fate's discourtesies," are working together for his good. Now this realisation has an eternal quality about it; not only is this attitude to God one which we cannot imagine as temporary, but so also is this new attitude to men. It is "eternal life" or, as it is often called in the New Testament, "the Kingdom of God"; it is in more modern language the discovery of the meaning of life and the fulfilment of it; to be a Christian in this sense is to be truly a man, a man as he is meant to be.

III. "The Plan of Salvation"

It would be well that those who have been brought up under the older theology should ask themselves this question: What more do they wish to add to their concept of salvation? If this is not to be saved, what is? But it will not escape notice that so to have stated the problem is to have rendered largely irrelevant much of the traditional salvation theology.[1] It is not to the purpose here to enter

[1] The relation of this chapter to traditional theories of Atonement may be thus briefly summarised: As soon as it is realised that sin is a wrong state of soul involving a wrong relation to God and to life, the whole problem of Atonement becomes: how can this wrong state of soul be changed? The old substitutionary and transactional theories (*e.g.* Augustine, Anselm, Calvin, Forsyth and to a large extent Denney) do not adequately face this problem and are morally repulsive because they regard something other than a soul harmonised in its relations to God and man as necessary

in detail into the older views; let it suffice that, as soon as it is recognised that the "plan of salvation" is not due to the problem how a number of unworthy persons deserving hell can somehow be "wangled" into heaven, but how free men and women can be awakened to facts, to realise that God is their Father and they are brethren and to order their lives on that assumption, then it will appear that no theology that operates with notions of debt and sacrifice and the language of the law-courts is adequate to the case; the problem is rather, what will bring the prodigal home and what will enable the elder brother to understand what home is. Only the language of the home is adequate. But it is necessary to say a few words here about a problem that is sure to present itself to a Christian man

to satisfy God; that is, they posit that God seeks non-moral satisfactions. Nor do the Representational theories (McLeod Campbell, Moberly) satisfactorily meet the case; for if we are not righteous Christ cannot represent us, and if we are righteous we have no need to be represented. Nor can we accept the Moral Influence theory as ordinarily propounded; for an example does little to strengthen our mortal weakness. The view expounded in the text, which is closely akin to the *so-called* Moral Influence theory of Abelard, its great exponent, who taught that Christ binds us to himself by love and so saves us, transcends the Moral Influence theory because it reveals the dynamic which, changing the nature, enables us to walk the path that moral insight dictates, and it can only be correctly described as a *Personal Influence* theory. As we relate our thinking to actual human experience, we realise that men are actually changed in character by personal influence. That which we need for salvation is that we should be open to the personal influence of the living Christ revealing to us livingly the will of God and coming to us in the personal way of "friendship." For a criticism of older views from a similar point of view to this see Dr. Rashdall's Bampton Lectures (Macmillan); for a fuller exposition of this view see W. F. Halliday's *Reconciliation and Reality*.

brought up in the old or indeed in the present school of thought. He will say, "If religion be, as you have defined it, the right attitude to life, and if all that we need is that we awake to reality and put away false ideas, what becomes of traditional Christianity? What central place can Christ have in such a religion? What is the need of a Mediator, of the Cross and the Resurrection and salvation "by the blood of Jesus"?

The answer to this question will become more plain in later chapters; but, first and foremost, we have to take the Old Testament seriously; we have to make up our minds whether the psalmists and prophets were really deluded when they believed themselves to have found God and to be reconciled to him. When the psalmist said, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he set our transgressions from us," when the prophet felt himself called to cry unto Jerusalem that "her warfare was accomplished and her iniquity was pardoned," were they suffering from a pathetic delusion, or did God really forgive sin before the time of Christ? When Jesus before his death and without reference to it told Zacchæus that that very day salvation had come to his house, was he misleading Zacchæus, or were his words true only in virtue of an event that had not yet taken place and never would take place even now, if men would repent and at the eleventh hour learn the things that belonged unto their peace? Such a notion seems to me to be taking religion into the realm of mystery and magic-mongering and to be essentially irreligious, because it involves a God who is not moral in all his conceptions and dealings. Notice that the history of the Old Testament is largely that of the

struggle between two notions of religion, the priestly and the prophetic; the former regarded religion as primarily something which concerned external acts arbitrarily chosen by the Deity, the proper performance of which would win his approval and favour; the latter regarded religion as the finding of God in daily life, not in the ritual of the sanctuary but in righteousness, mercy, justice and a humble walking with God in life. Now Jesus was in the line of the prophets; he called upon men to recognise their Father and their brethren and called men "blessed" (and what is that if not "saved"?) when they had a certain attitude to life described in the Beatitudes. The difference between him and the prophets was that he had an absolutely right relation to things, while their vision was partial and therefore their reconciliation to that extent imperfect; but the religion of the two Testaments is the same; yet only in Jesus do men see all that it involves of service and of joy, and Jesus saved men, as we have seen, not merely by setting forth a true doctrine and experiencing its truth in his own life, but by offering his friendship to people and thereby drawing them into that world in which he lived. It will become, I hope, very plain in the sequel that the Cross saves, but not because there is any virtue in a piece of wood, nor because it effected some cosmic transaction which altered God's attitude to men or his power of receiving them, but because it is the supreme illustration and expression of that which, for lack of a stronger word, I must call his redeeming, indestructible friendship or love of man. We are saved by love evoking love in us—that is, by awakening us to reality which is an order of love.

If it be a difficult notion to some readers that we may have to awake to realise that we are living in an order of a different kind from that we had supposed, let me illustrate it in a simple way. Imagine a great orchestra and choir with a conductor seeking to teach them to interpret some great piece of music, and somehow into the choir and orchestra there have come a few boys and girls who thought that the whole point of the thing was to have as good a time as possible, to enjoy playing tricks with their neighbours, to sing whatever occurred to them or to make as much noise out of their instruments as possible. For the sake of the illustration we will assume that the conductor and the performers are patient enough to bear with these interruptions. It is apparent there can be no solution of the problem until the interrupters awake to understand what the great music means and to see what is their part in it; once that is appreciated, they will regard both the conductor and their fellow-performers and their own duties and efforts in quite a new light, and they will find their own real happiness in taking the part assigned to them. In other words, they must awake to realise that they are living in an order the meaning of which is not that each shall do what finds momentary favour in his own eyes and make as much noise as he can and be as big a person as he can, but in which each can only fulfil his own nature by serving with the others and co-operating with them under the guidance of the conductor. Inadequate as it is, this may serve as a parable of life and will at least enable it to be clearly seen what is meant by the assertion that salvation consists in awakening to the true meaning of that order in which we live.

The cry of the human heart is for reconciliation, reconciliation with God and man and things or experience. A man cannot be happy while he feels that the universe is against him. But because this problem of human life has seemed to many to be insoluble, or because they have not had the courage to face it, they have sought peace (of a kind) in other ways; some have tried to go out of the world, and as hermits or monks or Quietists have sought to build a wall around themselves and to shut out all that in experience which jarred upon their senses; others have taken to mysticism and have comforted themselves "in a candle-lit chamber of ecstasy" with visions which often, owing to their ignorance of psychology, they have mistaken for the full blaze of heaven's light; others, again, have sought peace and a sense of security by having recourse to priestcraft and the power of rites and sacrifices and sacraments, others by pinning their faith with fanatical zeal to a theological system they have decided to regard as infallibly guaranteed (all these types, it will be noted, are to be found both within and without Christianity); others, again, have sought deliverance by "losing themselves" in their business or in pleasure or in "good works," others, again, by opium or alcohol, like the man who confessed he had got drunk as "the shortest way out of Manchester." But all these are ways of escape by refusing to face reality.[1] If we need

[1] It will be noted that these ways of escape correspond closely to the great psychological division of mankind into "introvert" and "extrovert." It is apt to be assumed by psychologists that this division is absolute and fundamental, part of the make-up of a man which he can as little change as the leopard his spots. The introvert is the man who, fearing to venture out into the open

to get out of Manchester to be religious, there is something wrong with religion.[1] Against all these it is here maintained that religion and salvation are a state of soul, a determination of personality, which is the right attitude to reality, to life and experience and God and man, and that Jesus saves us—that is, reconciles us—to God and his will by awakening the soul to that disposition towards God and one's fellows which he had himself. He gives man not primarily a mystical experience or

and to face reality there, would fain build about him some high wall, his home, his Church, a cloister, within which he can shelter and be warm and forget the outside world. The extrovert is the man who, fearing to stop and think and so to face reality, throws himself into life and experience, whether in the social round in drawing-room or public-house or into some hobby or his daily business of money-making, and so seeks to forget or not to think about the great problems of whence and why and whither. We may note that the typical illness of the former is neurasthenia, of the latter hysteria. But both these types not only represent the attempt to escape from reality, they are also abnormalities from the true type of man. Religion comes to deliver us from our idiosyncrasies. Both these types involve a deep selfishness, and therefore their corrective is love; for love brings the introvert out of himself and makes him face and share the lives, the sorrows and joys, of all his fellows, and love is discriminating and wise and delivers the extrovert from his uncritical and unreasoning attitude, shows him whence and why and whither, and thus makes him the master of his experience and not its servant. It is exceedingly important to notice that true religion harmonises temperaments and tends to destroy mere idiosyncrasies; for one of our great difficulties to-day is the fact that people attach themselves to particular denominations because of idiosyncratic and temperamental bias, which not only narrow the personality in its development, but in the Church as a whole form the great barrier to union through free insight and conviction.

[1] At the same time I do not wish to suggest that the conditions of life in our great modern cities are in themselves an "aid to religion"!

a new theology or orthodoxy but his own self in friendship and in love.

The problem of religion is not how a ransom can be paid,[1] or a legal code satisfied,[2] nor is it how an entail can be cut off,[3] nor how a corruptible nature can be made incorruptible by means of sacraments and incantations and a "grace" that operates like magic either in the physical body or in the subconscious mind;[4] but it is a question of personal relationships, how those who are alienated from their Father and their brethren can be brought home. Salvation is a home-coming, a reconciliation, such as may be experienced now and not only when we are passed through the gates of death.

If, then, religion has to be interpreted in terms of personal relationships in the realm of insight and conviction, it is possible to see at least in outline the answer to the questions raised earlier relative to traditional theology. What central place, we asked, has Jesus in religion as we now define it, what is the need of a Mediator, of the Cross and the Resurrection and salvation "by the blood of Jesus"? These questions really resolve themselves into two: (1) What is the significance for religion of Jesus as a person, and (2) What is the religious significance of things that happened to him?

Put in its briefest form the answer is this: In all ages men have been in touch with God; God spoke to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Plato, Gautama and many others in varying ways, but only imperfectly could

[1] As Augustine, and nearly all the Latin Fathers to the twelfth century.

[2] As Anselm.

[3] As Calvin.

[4] As the Greek Fathers and Catholicism generally.

they hear and understand; therefore their reconciliation to men and to experience was imperfect too. Jesus is central to religion because he saw and revealed fully that which the prophets had seen and revealed imperfectly, because he was perfectly and always Son in his Father's house, and by his friendship is able to bring us into a sonship of which the prophets and seers dreamed but which was beyond their assurance or their experience. As regards the things that happened to him, whether the manner of his death or the manner of his resurrection (however we interpret that), it must be said that what happens to a man is of itself of no religious significance; religion is concerned with the attitude which a man takes up towards that which happens to him and the meaning which he finds in it or imparts to it. It is obvious that man cannot be saved by what Pontius Pilate could do to Jesus, for if so, men would be saved not by Jesus who suffered but by Pilate who acted; the Cross, says Mr. Clutton Brock, was "a failure, unforeseen, disastrous, undesigned." That is not true, but it is certain that no man is saved by the wood of the Cross or the wounds of Christ, but by that which the Cross revealed, namely One whose love is superior to all enmity, and because as men have considered the significance of Jesus in his reaction to human hate, as they have looked not upon the drawn face of the Crucifix but into the soul revealed there, they have received the assurance that God is love, that he is the Father altogether to be trusted. Similarly the Resurrection regarded as a mere wonder is religiously without significance, but in so far as it speaks of a love that is victorious over death and a spiritual world in which death does not

count, because fellowship does not depend upon physical contact, it stands for the very essence of the religious life.

We began this chapter with a statement of the great human need. Man craves for the unification of his personality, for fellowship with his neighbour, for fellowship with a God whom he can call his Father, for the assurance that the experience of life is really of a Father's ordering, and finally for the certainty that in this fellowship with God and man there is an eternal element. Putting theology aside, the fulfilment of this craving we should call salvation, and it is precisely this craving that Jesus set himself to satisfy. He saves men by offering to them himself in his own friendship, through which friendship men come to live in that world in which he lives, a world in which God is the great glad reality, in which life is fellowship with him, a rejoicing in him, a sharing of his love and of his loving purposes. If we look through Jesus' eyes—and that is what it means to live in Jesus' world—all things are new and all men lovable, and no motives move but gratitude and the desire to serve, and all experience is from a Father's gracious ordinance and mediating a Father's Presence; it is a world in which death simply does not count. When Jesus is said to have come to seek and to save that which was lost, what does it mean but that they should come to think his thoughts and to share his life? To as many as receive him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God. Jesus is our Saviour because he is our Friend.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS AND THE GREAT OFFENSIVE

I have a Captain, and the heart
Of every private man
Has drunk in valour from his eyes,
Since first the war began:
He is most merciful in fight,
And of his scars a single sight
The embers of our failing might
Into a flame can fan.

T. T. LYNCH

I. "Suffered under Pontius Pilate"

Jesus is reported to have said of himself, "It is necessary that the Son of Man should . . . be crucified." Why was it necessary, and necessary for what? All kinds of theological necessities have been invented by the learned; it was necessary, men have said, because only by the blood of the Cross could man's sins be forgiven, for this was the way of forgiveness ordained by God. But if that were so, was the forgiveness preached and believed in under the Old Testament a sham and a delusion, and were the betrayal of Judas and the perfidy of the people and the callousness of Pilate ordained by God too, and if so was not the death of Christ ordained for the salvation of some and the damnation of others? And the insoluble problem still remains—what is the supposed relation between

Christ's death and our sin? We are not concerned here to go into the theological aspects of the problem. We shall not start from theological prejudice or presupposition, but shall ask as historians: why was it as a matter of fact that Jesus died? We shall find that politics rather than theology was the cause of the Crucifixion; and we may add that it has been this theologians' preoccupation with metaphysical theories of the Atonement that has veiled from the world the ethical and political significance of Christ's life and death and the nature of the kingdom for which he died.

It is plain from the records that Jesus came to believe, if he did not foresee from the beginning, that his death was necessary for the accomplishment of his work; yet he did not court death. We read of more than one attempt to murder him; and it is likely that many of his actions, his comings and goings, were due to the imminence of the assassin's knife or the fate of John the Baptist. He declined to be assassinated; he successfully escaped the mob; his hour, he said, was not yet come. But when that hour struck, he deliberately went up to Jerusalem to meet his death. "The Son of Man *must* suffer many things and be crucified."

Let us, then, seek, as best we may be able, to reconstruct the story and to see why as a matter of fact he was rejected and done to death. It would appear that for a while the ministries of Jesus and of John the Baptist ran side by side; like John, Jesus or his disciples seem to have practised baptism as the rite of initiation, and both preached repentance unto the remission of sins and the advent of the long-expected Revolution or the "kingdom of God."

Then comes the time when John proclaims that

Herod is living in open sin, which was but the simple truth; and Herod claps him into prison. Great was the excitement throughout the length and breadth of the country and especially in Galilee. There had long been an expectation of the Deliverer and of the new age, and this expectation John had fanned; there was intense religious fanaticism and political rancour and discontent; and now John, the popular hero, is in prison, and inevitably his mantle seems to fall upon this younger man. What will Jesus do? Will he let John suffer imprisonment and perhaps martyrdom and do nothing to save him? Will he stand by and let the prophet of the Lord be trampled upon by a worldly monarch who considers himself beyond good and evil? This is the moment when Jesus enters into Galilee, the storm-centre of political discontent, the home of the Zealot movement.[1]

Into this milieu he comes proclaiming that the time is fulfilled and the expected Revolution is at hand. At first he receives a ready hearing; his miracles are acceptable and seem to corroborate what he says; his message is just the thing for the times. Well, what will he do?

Jesus does nothing. He just goes through the villages preaching and teaching and healing. Weeks

[1] The Zealots were those who wished and were awaiting their opportunity to usher in the "kingdom of God" by violently overthrowing the military imperialism of the Roman rule; thus the phrase "the kingdom of heaven" had for most a distinctly political connotation, and the Zealots were the left wing of the political agitators and reformers of their day. This is not to deny that in their hope and ideal there was a large religious element, but it is to assert that it was also a political revolution to which they looked, a new age on earth which was to come by violently upsetting the present order and substituting another.

pass; months pass; still he makes no move. The people become impatient; they are only too anxious to rise and follow him if only he will give the lead. Why did he not inaugurate the revolution by "storming the Bastille,"[1] or incite the Galileans to go up to Herod as our own west countrymen set out for London singing:

> And shall they scorn Tre, Pol, and Pen?
> And shall Trelawney die?
> Then fifty thousand Cornishmen
> Will know the reason why!

Then the rumour went round, "He's afraid; he does not mean to do anything; he would rather leave his friend in the lurch; what is the good of preaching and talking about the kingdom, if he will not draw the sword for it? You cannot change the world by talking." Possibly John shared this feeling, and for this reason sent his deputation to Jesus: "If you are the One I took you for, why are you doing nothing, why are you taking no steps to get me out of prison?"

Others said, "It is just diffidence on his part; we will force him to take action." So they tried to make him king by force, and to make him burn his boats; but he managed to escape them; that was not the crown that he would wear. We are not surprised to read that from that time many ceased to follow him.

He is left with the Twelve and a few others, faithful but sorely tried and bewildered and disappointed. Presumably Judas Iscariot with the others still thought that he was only biding his

[1] John was imprisoned in the lonely fortress of Machaerus.

time. Is he not always saying, they reflected, "Mine hour is not yet come"? The patriotism of Jesus and his sympathy with all those who looked for the new age is not in doubt; for he used the language of their hopes as the best available expression of that which he sought. But the revolution in human life to which he looked was wider and deeper than they had an inkling of, and it could not come by these means that they would use. So he must bear the burden of misunderstanding and contempt and avoidance and the agony of disappointing those who looked to him and expected great things from him and were so keen to follow if he would but give a lead. If he had any temptation, it must have been, not indeed to do as the populace asked him, for that would have been to deny everything for which he stood, but rather to say again what John had said and to share the doom of John; anything would be easier than to appear a coward and a deserter; yet still he knew that his hour was not yet come. Not one understood him; how many times must he have said in his heart, "My kingdom is not of this world"; "get thee behind me, Satan." How he must have loved those few who were loyal to him even though they could not understand! He is no longer the idol of the populace. The Pharisees are not slow to take their opportunity. For the clergy of that day have clearly seen that his teaching threatens the established notions of religion and their own position. "He is trampling under foot the conventions upon which civilisation rests; he is sapping the foundations of morality. He who sets up as a Rabbi, a teacher of the Kingdom, mixes quite openly with all sorts of people, likes a good

K. C. K. BAPTIST SEMINARY

table,' is 'a friend of officials and their mistresses'; in spite of all his fine talk he has no real respect for religion; he neither keeps the Sabbaths nor the fasts; he panders to the low tastes of the common people; he is the most dangerous kind of enemy that religion has; at all costs we must shut his mouth. Besides, he is not really loyal to the State; he is a danger to society; he really ought to be dealt with by the police."

Now the Pharisees, it will be remembered, were far from loyal to the State, that is the secular power, themselves. They were the bitter enemies of the Herodians. Still in this crisis, this peril of Church and State, an understanding even with the Herodians would be a holy alliance. In this connection we can see the cunning of that question they put to him: Shall we pay tribute to Cæsar or no? If he said "Yes," his influence with the people was gone; if he said "No," they could conveniently leave it to the Government to get rid of him.[1]

[1] The exact situation relative to the various parties in Palestine seems to have been as follows: In *Galilee* Jesus was in opposition to the Pharisees in the matter of the Law (this would not greatly offend the Herodians); he was in opposition to the Herodians in his theocratic teaching (here the Pharisees would agree with him). In *Judæa* he still had the opposition of Pharisees and Herodians, but the chief actors in the opposition were the Sadducees, who were philo-Roman and who, far more whole-heartedly than the Herodians, were prepared to compromise with the Imperial Government. If Jesus had denied that the tax should be paid to Rome, the Pharisees could trust the Sadducees to do the rest. The Pharisees and Herodians were themselves theoretically opposed to the payment of the tax, but they were not prepared to stand by their principle and were thus convicted of "hypocrisy." There seems to me a delightful touch of humour in the request that *they* should show him a "penny," which on their own theory they ought not to have touched!

Deserted by the people but still the possible rallying point for fanatical and nationalist sentiment and therefore a danger to Herod, bitterly opposed by the scribes and Pharisees, the official religious leaders, Jesus had practically to escape outside the confines of Palestine or to the unfrequented and desert parts, an exile rejected and discredited and, especially after the death of John, in constant danger of assassination.

We pass on a little. The time of the Passover is at hand, and hopes run high. Perhaps it is whispered abroad that he is leaving his retirement and coming up to the Feast. We can imagine how his disciples drew a long sigh of relief. "At last," they said, "he is going to do something; at last his hour is come, and he will appear as the leader and avenger of his people." But when he gets to Jericho and, as they supposed, just when it was most vital that he should rally public opinion to his side, he makes the incredible tactical mistake of inviting himself to dinner with a notorious tax-gatherer, and, to make matters worse, he publicly refers to him as a true son of Abraham. But all seemed to be retrieved when he entered the city from the Mount of Olives in royal state riding upon an ass amid the plaudits of the pilgrims. That was a burning of his boats indeed; there could be no doubt as to what that signified. Not only the disciples but the populace were on the tip-toe of excitement; what would he do next, how would he open his campaign? He goes into the Temple and clears the courts. We must not miss the significance of this act in the drama of these last days. The Sadducees were in control of the Temple management, and they were using their power to

exploit the whole people. The Temple was to have been "a house of prayer for all nations"; Christ accuses them of making it "a den of brigands." He had incurred the hatred of the Pharisees and the Zealots because he would not break with Rome; now in the very citadel of their power he charges the Sadducees, the compromising party, with the grossest sacrilege. They would give no quarter after that. This was a satisfactory opening of the campaign. What next? Nothing but words, it appears; he teaches in the Temple; he disputes with the wise men. At any rate he has definitely thrown down a challenge; it is accepted; the officials of the Church and nation ask him for his authority; he did not get it from them; does he claim it from Cæsar or from Herod? Imagine their consternation when out of their own mouths he convicts *them*, the religious leaders of the people, of lacking that moral insight which alone enables men to recognise spiritual authority; and this rebuke he follows up by a parable manifestly aimed at them and their leadership, and not the simplest of his audience could miss his meaning. Henceforward the religious leaders are implacably determined on his death; they send out spies to catch him and wait their opportunity. Only one thing will save him, namely that he should put himself at the head of a popular movement and lead the people against the Roman garrison. It was still not too late for that if only he would bestir himself, as his disciples no doubt often told him. But no, he will do nothing. He simply plays into the hand of his enemies. The disciples are in despair, and one of them at least is furious. It is quite possible that the action of Judas was an

attempt to force Jesus' hand before it was too late and the people had begun to leave the city after the feast. Judas' treachery is not hid from Jesus; he is not taken off his guard; yet he who hitherto had not feared the title of coward, who had resolutely refused to be assassinated, will now take no steps to escape his fate; after making one last appeal to him he even tells Judas to go and do that which he has planned to do. What is his policy? say the perplexed disciples; what can be the meaning of his inaction? Then follows the unforgettable scene in the upper chamber when he gives a solemn goodbye to his followers with many words that they cannot well understand, bequeathing them his peace and speaking to them of his coming again and of "another Comforter." They are filled with perplexity and dismay, and it is hard to see how much they understood; still, they loved him and would have died to a man fighting around his standard—if only he would raise it. But he will not. Then the hasty arrest at night, when he absolutely refuses to let his disciples resist; the examination before the High Priests—"Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" "I am, and you shall see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming in the clouds of heaven"; the trial before Pilate—"My kingdom is not of this world, then would my servants fight. . . . I am a king"; then the sequel, the death upon the Cross, unresisting, in ignominy and shame. To the last the disciples hoped that he would do something to reveal his Messiahship, come down from the Cross and smite his enemies; instead of that only the exceeding bitter cry and "Father, forgive them, for they know

not what they do," which was diviner far than any sign from heaven.[1]

II. The New Kingdom

We are not concerned at the moment with what followed on his death; we have attempted in the light of historical research to give a brief outline of the events and opinions that led to the Crucifixion. But the matter cannot be left here; for the facts are meaningless apart from their explanation. If really his kingdom was not of this world, as he said, why need he have come into conflict with the authorities of his day? If he was really a Quietist concerned with the world to come and not concerned with this world, his conduct is as inexplicable as the hatred he aroused. In other words our problem is this: Why did he so largely identify himself with the popular hopes and openly claim to be king, and at the same time refuse to put himself at the head of the people and to conciliate all parties? Was he a visionary who really supposed that God would intervene and bring him down from the Cross, or, on the other hand, was he an other-worldly teacher and not a social revolutionary at all?

The answer is simple once we have the key; it is this: Jesus did set himself to inaugurate a kingdom; this kingdom was in its essence not an earthly kingdom because it consisted in a new relation between man and God, between man and his neighbour. But because this new attitude inevitably involved

[1] For a fuller treatment of the life and times of Jesus see *Philochristus*, by Dr. E. A. Abbott (Macmillan), and *The Christ of Revolution*, by J. R. Coates, B.A. (Swarthmore Press), both invaluable books.

a change of the most fundamental kind in the outward life of the world, Jesus was most certainly a revolutionary and far more revolutionary than those who usually take that name upon themselves; he did not expect God to take him down from the Cross; the Cross was in his campaign the *great Offensive*, and it is the preoccupation of the Church with theological theories that has blinded it to this primary meaning of Christ's death. It is therefore necessary to show how and in what sense the Cross is not so properly called "the Passion" as "the great Offensive."

Primarily and strictly "the kingdom of God" in the teaching of Jesus is neither a social order to be established in this world nor is it a purely future kingdom after this life and in "heaven." It is something into which any man may enter at this moment; the essence of it is the right and filial relation to God and the right and brotherly relation to man. To enter the "kingdom of heaven" is not to leave this physical world, but, as we saw in the first chapter, to be a new person in this world and to view all men and all things in it in a new light. The quality of this new life is that a man is delivered from all fear and worry because he has found God and is no more a stranger or a servant but a son in a Father's house, and, second, that all men appear as no more servants or employers, English or German, white or black, but simply as brethren beloved. If any man have this attitude to God and his neighbour, he is in the kingdom; whether he live under a democracy or a tyranny, or whether the fashion of this world shall have passed away, it matters not at all, for the essence of the kingdom cannot change. This explains, and alone explains, how it is that

Christ sometimes seems to speak of the kingdom as present, sometimes as future and sometimes as wholly inward; the only way he never speaks of it is as a future social system. But when this has been said, it must be emphatically contended on the other hand that if a man's relations to his neighbour are changed, so will his conduct be. And where there is a company of men who are thus "in the kingdom," the very structure of society will be altered. We read in the narrative of the Temptation at the beginning of his ministry that Jesus saw "all the nations of the earth in a moment of time"; he refused to accept these kingdoms at the price offered, but nothing is more certain than that he deliberately set himself to conquer them all, and that his conquest meant a revolution—social, economic and political.

It must be clearly understood that Jesus did not aim at anything less than did the Zealots, who wished to drive the Romans out of Jerusalem by force and by force establish the reign of God and of the righteous. That would be admitted verbally by the Christian Churches, but they have assumed that because he would not use the Zealots' way, therefore he believed in peaceful and slow, political and evolutionary processes, and so has the Christian Gospel been emasculated.

How, then, was the Cross the great moral Offensive? We may return to the story of the Temptation at the beginning of his ministry. John had recognised him as the coming One. But could he be Messiah if he was hungry and without food? And if he was Messiah, should he not command the stones to be made bread and would they not obey him? No, he could do no private miracles for

himself, for if he did and refused to share man's lot in everything, he could not be their Saviour and deliverer; and there alone in the wilderness he once for all set aside the thought that he might win his kingdom by military violence or the prestige which a "sign from heaven" would bring him. But in the world of his day to take this attitude could only mean death, even though the manner and occasion of his future death was not pre-determined. Why, then, did he refuse these means? Nor for any arbitrary reason but because by the very nature and constitution of things they were powerless to achieve his end. For if the kingdom of heaven be, as defined above, a new relation both to God and one's fellow, it is plain that all external means must fail to accomplish it. For instance, it is possible and even easy to take a naughty child from the table and according to the familiar mode to place him in the corner with his face to the wall; force or even a word of command will effect that. By force or awe, then, a child can be put into disgrace, but by these means no child can be put into grace, which is the opposite of disgrace. True, the chair may be brought back to the table and the child placed on it; force can accomplish that much. But family life consists not in externals but in a spirit and life, and that is a matter of inward consent and happiness. For though the child be reseated at the table, yet is the conversation forced and unnatural; there are no spontaneous jokes, no freedom and no happiness until there be a change of heart. So in the great spiritual home; you cannot force a man to love God nor yet to love his brother. The political outcome of this is plain enough and will become plainer as we proceed.

Where men come to love one another, there will inevitably be a revolution in political, industrial and social life; where men do not love one another, political and economic changes can deal only with the externals of things. The sum and substance of the matter is this, that this world cannot be understood apart from the Father's rule; the Father will order society where men are open to his will, but no struggle for human rights will solve the problem of the soul or of the world.

According to current theory God is supposed to chastise man for his good. Now through punishment men and nations may perhaps be brought to see the error of their ways and be convicted of folly; but love is provoked by other means. It is one thing to be convicted of folly; quite another to be convicted of sin; disaster may convince people that their principles do not work, but it may leave them only sorry that they do not work. Nothing less than a change of heart is adequate to the purpose.

III. Christ or Barabbas

But an immediate objection rises in the minds of men. They say, "It is true that the ideal solution of our social problem (so-called) is that men should consent to change it, and that no other solution is nearly so good; but suppose men be recalcitrant, is it not better that political force, nay, violence, should be used to create an order which is manifestly more equitable than the present? In any event are we to go on talking and trying to persuade and passing pious resolutions while children are dying in the slums and thousands of our fellows are being

starved and stunted and denied the possibilities of the kind of life they ought to have?" For the moment let two observations suffice: first, that Jesus looked upon every man as a brother, therefore he could not treat any man as if he were anything but a brother; and second, that his way was by no means only that of talking and persuading; still less did he pass resolutions pious or otherwise. We may also add in this connection the often forgotten fact that it is better to suffer evil than to do evil, and therefore we may assume that to Jesus the slum-owner presents a far greater and more difficult problem than the slum-dweller. But in both cases Jesus believed in "direct action," and we must now consider what that was, and then pass on to some application of his principles to our own day. Jesus, as we have insisted, did not deal with systems but with persons, and for the very good reason that systems are simply organised personal relationships; change the relationship, and the system is destroyed. Under the Roman Empire the system of the collecting of the Imperial revenue put a premium upon extortion. Jesus, so far as we know, never said a word against the system; he did not appeal to the Emperor to change it (politics); he did not appeal to the Zealots (violence); he believed in direct action; so he appealed direct to Zacchæus. At last Zacchæus had met some one who, for all his patriotic feeling about the Roman oppression and for all his horror of extortion, yet did not denounce him nor even scorn him, but manifestly loved him, believed in his better nature, and on the strength of that faith was prepared to come and dine with him and treat him as a brother, even though he hated his business and had seen no

fruit of repentance in him. Jesus won Zacchæus, and the whole neighbourhood began to feel the difference at once. In comparison with the way of Jesus the way of the violent and the way of the politician alike are slow and indirect and ineffective, or rather they produce an altogether different result.

We may take another illustration from the woman taken in adultery. She may be said in her own person to sum up the social problem. There were as usual three possibilities in her case; she might be handed over to mob violence; she might be handed over to the law and be either judicially murdered or put away (had there been such institutions in her day) to some penitentiary or jail; but Jesus' way was better: he appealed direct to her. At last she had met one who by every look and gesture and all that he was showed his attitude to the life that she had lived. Never for one instant could she think that he was condoning her sin; but here was some one who loved her and believed in her, some one who would stand by her and without condemning would appeal to her; the law and the mob could only inspire her with resentment; Jesus solved the social problem in principle when he won her soul to purity and God. That is Jesus' way; it is not familiar but is alone effective. But what if the appeal to love should fail? What if the slum-owner or profiteer or hardened criminal resist love and all that love can do? What then? Shall we not invoke the legal system or in the last resort use force?

We may first notice Jesus' way with Peter. They had been about three years together, and Jesus had revealed his own soul in friendship to Peter as far as Peter had been able to understand; but

in the end, when it came to the final crisis, he seemed to have failed; for Peter said publicly that as for this man he had nothing to do with him, and what happened to him was not any concern of his; "and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter went out and wept bitterly." Love had failed, at least had partly failed, so love must try again; for Jesus had no "second string to his bow." Peter thought he had lost his friend for ever both in this world and that which is to come; that is why he wept so bitterly. But on the Resurrection morning the first message is, "Go and tell the disciples and Peter." "What," said Peter, "did he speak of *me*? Did he send a special message to *me*? Does he want to see *me* again?" Then the Lord appeared to Peter and nearly broke his heart by asking him, "Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me?" Jesus possessed Peter for ever after that.

But does love never fail? We are on clearer ground when we assert that Jesus tried no other way. He did not tell the others to keep an eye on Judas; he did not hide from him his secrets; he did not let him feel that there was anything between them, for on Jesus' side there was nothing; to the very end he appealed to him; and failed? When the tragedy was over and Judas saw what he had done, he went away and committed suicide "whilst temporarily insane"; does that suggest that love had altogether failed?

But let us take an instance on a larger scale. Jesus made a real appeal to the Jews of his time. Some theological systems have so insisted upon the Cross as part of the preordained divine plan as to make his appeals to Jerusalem and his tears over

Jerusalem almost a mockery. But he made a real appeal to free men, and with a few exceptions it was a failure. He came before men telling them of their one hope; his way was neither that of the Sadducees and the Herodians (compromise with Cæsar) nor that of the Zealots ("quartering steel and climbing fire"); he had insight to see what the end of that must be. He came with his own new better way; and it was by the singular irony of history that, having to choose between two men, the Jews chose Barabbas; now Barabbas was in prison and under condemnation for making insurrection and for doing just that which Jesus would not do. There is a dramatic fitness about that choice and scene.

IV. The Last Appeal

But why did Jesus die? Surely it was not necessary? For months it must have been plain that the religious leaders would do their utmost to destroy him, and he knew that he would not resist; then why did he not take what must have seemed the prudent and sensible course and give up his crusade in Palestine to find some congenial soil for his sowing? Even at the very end it was not too late; we read that some "Greeks," presumably Greek-speaking Jews from Alexandria, wanted to see him. There was a chance! The soil in Judæa was barren, but in the liberal and progressive atmosphere of Alexandria, far away from the Temple and the Pharisees and the local provincialism of Palestine, he might find men who would listen to his message and who, by education and spiritual insight, might

be able better to appreciate it than these fisherfolk and the uneducated mob; and did he not long to go to all nations, and was it not very necessary that he should have more time, and did not he owe it to himself and to mankind to refuse to be put away in this corner of the Empire? Why should he not do as Paul did later and shake out his tunic and say, "Your blood be on your own heads; I go to the Gentiles"? That there was real temptation here who can doubt? His emotion we can perhaps gauge from his strange answer to the deputation, "Unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He would not go, for to have gone would have meant an abandonment of love's last tremendous weapon. He must show his utter disinterestedness, he must appeal to them in the only way left by showing that even though they reject him and crucify him, still he loves them and still he will appeal to them: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That was the last and greatest appeal; it was the great Offensive of love; and in spite of its apparent failure, who regarding the history of the world since that day would not agree that Jesus on the Cross has done more to heal the wounds of humanity, to overthrow false and evil systems and to redeem sinners than all the empires and judicial codes and revolutionaries put together? The Cross is the only way, and it is the great Offensive. Jesus

> found one kingdom not in harmony;
> The sin and sorrow in the world, the stream
> Of evil, gathering on from age to age,
> With all its rocks and all its wrecks of life;
> And men's hearts hardened, and the tender lips

Of women loud in laughter, and the sobs
Of children helpless, and the sighs of slaves,
And priests with dead lies for the living truth,
And kings whose rights were in their people's wrong;
And looking, the miraculous tender eyes,
Upon these perishing and gone astray,
Lifted the hands of help, alone, unarmed,
Struck singly out, and dashed upon the rocks,
And in that shock did meet his human doom
Of suffering, and took it for a crown;
The loneliness, the weariness, the strife,
The base return, the Passion and the Cross,
And the withdrawal of his Father's face.
So that for ever since, in minds of men,
By some true instinct this life has survived
In a religious immemorial light,
Pre-eminent in one thing most of all;
The Man of Sorrows; and the Cross of Christ
Is more to us than all his miracles.

CHAPTER V

JESUS AS REFORMER

When men are friends, there is no need of justice; but when they are just, they still need friendship.—ARISTOTLE

I. The Individual and the Crowd

This chapter is an elaboration of that which was implied in the last. Jesus' attitude to the industrial, political and commercial problems of his time was relative to the nature of the kingdom he came to inaugurate and the method of its establishment which that nature involved.

But it is well to note that for the most part his work was what we should call "personal work," and that he dealt with public questions almost parenthetically. But this very fact is not without significance; for there is no solution of any of these public questions till individuals accept the kingdom or kingship of God, that is to say, until they come to share the Father's mind as Jesus shared it and to enter the Father's love as Jesus understood it. The politician who deals with men in the mass is always farther from reality than the man who seeks to influence and to mould individuals; no work of the former is of much avail apart from the latter; the former cannot at best do more than register what the latter has accomplished.

Jesus was truly a social revolutionary; he aimed

certainly at nothing less than the complete reconstitution of society. Yet he spent his public ministry, for the most part, either in " going about doing good " or in training (without any apparent reference to politics or industry) a small band of disciples. It is not unnatural that men should ask in perplexity, " What is the relation, if any, between the healing of the paralytic and the social revolution, between Christ's neighbourliness and the Roman Empire ? Was not Jesus a Quietist, seeking to pluck a few brands from the burning and leaving the evil world to its own wicked devices ? " The answer of his whole life says No to this last question ; it cannot be too emphatically stated that this quiet work in Galilee was *par excellence* his method of attacking social evils, and for this reason, that instead of tinkering with externals as the politician is bound to do (for politics concern the outward act, not the inward state) Jesus went to the root of the matter and attacked the evil in its seat in the hearts of individual men. We shall see this yet more plainly in the sequel, but let it be noted that that which he did for the paralytic had a very direct social consequence ; for the man who has come to live in Jesus' world is one whose whole attitude to his neighbour will be changed, for he has come to look upon him with new eyes, as a brother beloved and no more a neighbour to be avoided or borne with or appeased as the case may be.

How far did Jesus succeed in bringing and inaugurating the kingdom ? Of his success in Galilee we can say little, and we must remember that his sojourn there was very short. But the kind of work he accomplished we may see from a few illustrations taken generally from his life. There

was, for instance, a wealthy man Nicodemus who came to him by night and who had speech with him. Neither on this occasion nor on any other did Jesus use the power and influence of rhetoric or the allurement of reward, nor did he make any appeal but to freedom and to insight. He tried to make Nicodemus see what he really stood for, and what his kingdom meant. It was all new and strange; Nicodemus could not take it in at first, could not whole-heartedly consent to it; but he knew he had never met one like this teacher and had spiritual insight enough to realise that Jesus lived in a purer and nobler atmosphere than any other; perhaps he thought the way and teaching of Jesus to be Utopian and unpractical. Never mind; he and Joseph of Arimathæa risked obloquy and persecution by voting against the resolution of the Sanhedrin; and when Jesus hung there dead upon the Cross and there was nothing more that could be done for him, and when the request meant only danger and suspicion and might be ranked as sentiment, Nicodemus showed what he really felt about Jesus by what he did. He might not, as perhaps he would have put it, be able to go the whole way with Jesus, but even his dead body was holy in Nicodemus' eyes and worthy of reverence and care; he could never say what he owed to Jesus, and he worshipped him, in spite of everything, for what he stood for. If Jesus had been willing to conform a little more to the religious conventions of his day, he might have had a more whole-hearted follower of Nicodemus during his life, but Nicodemus would not really have understood; he would not have followed Jesus just for what he was in himself.

Again, there was a centurion in charge of the crucifixion party. The centurion was not dainty; he had seen plenty of men die in this way in his time and he did not quarrel with his job, but any one could see that the man who was being crucified on this occasion was innocent. The centurion had likely enough seen innocent men crucified before now and watched them die cursing at their fate and their enemies; but this man was far other, and when he died praying for his enemies, for the Jews, for the Romans, for the centurion himself, the exclamation was forced from his lips, "Surely this was a son of God." The centurion was not a Christian yet, but he had begun to see into another world and his heart was stirred; he was the firstfruits of "the great Offensive." By putting himself at the head of his countrymen Jesus might have conquered that centurion and slain him; that was not the victory Jesus sought; not by such means can children be brought home.

Let these two illustrations suffice, and let us go on to show how as a matter of fact Jesus by this method, which at first sight seems so ineffective, did accomplish that which none other even attempted to do, and which could not be accomplished otherwise. The world of his day was quite as bitterly divided as ours. These divisions were national and international. Within the Jewish State there were the two parties: the patriots who nourished an undying hatred of the usurping, tyrannical Roman Empire (the left wing of these were the Zealots, who were agog to drive the Romans from Jerusalem, and who were absolutists in their opposition to any compromise with the pagan Empire); on the other hand, there were those who

both in the political and economic spheres chose to make the best of the situation and who were quite prepared to compromise, at least for the time being. We are not surprised that if there was one man the Zealot hated more than the Roman, it was the conforming, unpatriotic publican who farmed the Roman taxes. Between these two there could be no compromise and no agreement; they were not on speaking terms. The only solution which the ancient world could offer of their problem was the unconditional destruction of one party or the other; the division was far more bitter than normally that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the modern State. If we were asked which was the greatest miracle recorded of Jesus of Nazareth, well might we answer, that he made Simon the Zealot and Matthew the publican sit down together at the same table as brothers and as friends. What did Simon say when first he learned that a publican was to be one of their little company? What did Simon suffer when they gathered in the evening after the day's work and Matthew would talk his publican's "shop"? How Simon's fingers itched to draw his dagger and do for Matthew then and there! But Jesus reconciled and made brothers of those two; there was none other on earth who even attempted to do it. Simon might have murdered Matthew as he wanted to do, but that would not have solved his problem; the proletariat may set up a Red Terror and so have their way, but there is a better way, and there is a peace that no Red Terror can accomplish.

There is no more scornful division in the modern world than obtains in India between the high caste and the outcaste. As the Pharisee of old regarded

himself as defiled by the very touch of an unclean person, so the modern Brahmin (even sometimes when he has come under the influence of Western education) considers himself polluted if but the shadow of an outcaste fall upon him. Well I remember meeting a Brahmin of the highest caste who had become a Christian, and who was living up the nearer slopes of the Himalayas; he was in charge of a leper hospital and in no way refusing the loathsomeness and humbleness of that work which he undertook for Jesus' sake. In these days, too, Jesus can solve the problems which none other even claims to solve.

Again, the modern world knows no deeper and more unbridgeable division than that which there was between the Roman and the Jew. A Roman, it is true, might become a proselyte, but in the main the pagan was "an uncircumcised dog," destined in the Providence of God to be the slave instead of the master of the chosen people. The Roman retaliated by calling the Jew the "common enemy of the human race" and much besides. In the current life of the world it was no doubt necessary for Roman and Jew to meet, but they could not sit together at table; they were rivals and enemies, not brothers. Now a large part of the *motif* of the New Testament is just this triumphant refrain: "He hath made both one; he hath broken down the middle wall of partition; them that were at enmity hath he reconciled by the blood of his Cross." England can go to war with Germany or Ireland with England—that is a comparatively simple matter; but when the war is over, or haply before ever it breaks out, to reconcile the two parties—that is a harder matter, that is the

great and splendid victory. The story of Afrikaner is happily familiar. Afrikaner as a young man had slain his neighbour, the chief of another tribe, slain him and eaten him; and against him the son of the slain man had vowed and intended a blood feud. In process of time both these tribes became Christian, and it so happened that on some great occasion Afrikaner and the son of the murdered man met together as brothers at the table of the Lord. The Roman eagles or the Zealot bands or the British Army or a powerful chieftain might destroy the enemy and make a wilderness and call it peace, but the peace which Jesus makes is of a different and diviner sort, and it comes by other means.

Let it suffice for the moment that this quiet, personal method of Jesus has succeeded in altering the very hearts of some men and has, at least on a small scale, actually accomplished that which no other power on earth has accomplished, namely, made a peace of reconciliation. Now that which avails for one is in potentiality able to avail for all. And we may notice that this change is accomplished through causing individuals so to live in another world of thought as that they come to look at all men in a different light. The Zealot does not agree with the publican, but he loves him as a brother; the Jew does not become a Gentile, but he desires nothing so much as to possess his brother's soul in love. In other words, the desire to dominate and to compel has given place to the great longing for fellowship. Fellowship was that which Jesus sought; he would never compel discipleship by eloquence or the threat of hell or by constraint or violence—and herein he is distinguished as in other matters from the Churches called by his name.

He desired the fellowship and friendship of every man; his kingdom was not a domination but a free, united family. With us the brotherhood of man is an abstract idea, a cant phrase; we rarely think seriously of treating either our neighbours or our servants or our employees, not to mention our rivals and enemies, as our brothers. To Jesus the brotherhood of man was an absolute reality; he believed it to be a fact; he believed (if we may parody St. Augustine's great saying) that men's hearts are so made for one another that there is no peace for them till they find fellowship with one another. Shyness, indifference, assumed gaiety and unconcern are but a thin veil to hide man's yearning for fellowship. Men do not want to have good done to them but to be loved and to be delivered from themselves through some one who loves them and believes in them. That faith in and insight into human nature was a part of what it meant to respond to Jesus and to begin to live in his world.

Now it is very likely that what has been written so far will command the very general assent of Christian people. They will agree that Christ worked personally in this way, and that Christians must follow him in this, but they will say that this is but half the story; they will ask what was his relation to the political and social and industrial order of his day; they will suggest that he did not employ only these means, for did he not denounce the Pharisees, cleanse the Temple, and threaten the vengeance of God? And they will add that while we follow him in this personal way, we have to live in a world of trade unions and joint stock companies and representative institutions and international organisations and local government;

and through the channels thus provided we must also seek to bring in the kingdom. Has Jesus any guidance here?

So we turn now to such evidence as seems available in regard to Jesus' attitude to the social and economic and political situation of his day.

II. Industry, Politics and Economics

In this section we shall be confined by the paucity of our evidence to certain incidents which by implication indicate the attitude of Christ in these matters.

On one occasion two brothers came before him; the one has swindled the other in the matter of his inheritance. From the point of view of the law courts it is a perfectly clear case; nor is it possible to suppose either that Jesus had little sympathy with the cause of those who were wronged or that he failed to realise that the society of his time could not cohere without the vindication of justice and the righting of wrong. Why was it that Jesus refused to be a judge and a law-giver? What was his answer when men said, "Well, you are undermining the very foundations of society if you do not insist on the righting of this wrong; property will nowhere be safe; we shall have anarchy, and there will be the end of civilisation"? Jesus' refusal to be a divider was not due to the urgent claims of his life-work as Messiah, but it was because the real problem as it presented itself to him was quite other than they supposed. To get a fair division of the property by arbitration or the compulsion of the police or of public opinion and mob violence might be and indeed would have been a fairly easy

matter; but the problem as it presented itself to Jesus was not "How can I get a fair division?" but "How can I reconcile these two brothers?"

For justice and fair dealing follow inevitably where there is love and brotherhood, but where there is no brotherly feeling there is no true happiness. Jesus appealed directly to both parties, "Beware of covetousness." With covetousness gone, there would be no problem; with covetousness there, there was no solution of the problem. The legal method did not and could not touch the heart of the matter; for legality and justice are concerned with externals and do not affect the heart.

It is possible that on another occasion a village dispute was brought before him. One brother owed another a debt; the creditor comes to Jesus and asks, "How often am I to forgive him? seven times? how far may the law be broken?" Jesus' answer is in effect, "Seven times! I tell you seventy times seven! your need is not your brother's money but your brother's love! If legal proceedings will come between you and a reconciliation, let legal proceedings wait for ever!" We may compare with this the parable of "the Debtor," in which the creditor, representing God, says to the suppliant debtor about the money, "Friend, do you think a thing like that shall ever stand between you and me?"

Whether the dispute be between two brothers or between Capital and Labour, the real problem as conceived in the mind of Christ is, how to expel the evil will and the covetousness from both parties, without which expulsion no fairer division of property will solve the real social problem.

That Jesus was unconcerned about legal justice is plain from another instance :

> Jesus was sitting in Moses' chair,
> They brought the trembling woman there.
> Moses commands she be ston'd to death,
> What was the sound of Jesus' breath ?
> He laid his hand on Moses' law ;
> The ancient heavens, in silent awe,
> Writ with curses from pole to pole,
> All away began to roll.

We need not to be told that Jesus was concerned about the purity of home life ; we know that his law of marriage was stricter than any Moses taught ; we know too in some measure what he felt about the sin ; for he could not even lift his eyes from the ground ; but he would have nothing whatever to do with the vindication of the law, nor would he countenance its infliction by others. Why not ? Was he not just ? Was he merciful in a sentimental kind of way so that he would leave the dirty work of the world to others and would not touch it himself ? Such an attitude was far from him. We can only make sense of his life when we assert of him that, strictly speaking, he is neither just nor merciful, but that he is moved by some higher emotion which comprehends and transcends both, namely, he is redeeming ;[1] for Jesus' interest, and his sole interest, with the two brothers is to redeem. So here ; the death penalty may be just ; its remission may be merciful, but Jesus is concerned with neither of these things ; he is set to redeem the woman from her unblest life and to redeem the people from their evil passion of outraged respecta-

[1] See Halliday, *op. cit.*, pp. 202 ff.

bility and moral hypocrisy. There is no redemption in the processes of the law court; there is no other Christian interest but redemption.[1]

It is a matter of common agreement amongst most revolutionaries of every school that not only must the hearts of men be changed, but that the economic and political and social system must be destroyed. There is no doubt that Jesus sought a complete transformation of the present world-order of his day; but it is noteworthy that he says nothing about a system and never attacks a system as such. Now a system can be destroyed from without as the Zealots sought to destroy it, or from within by the method which Jesus chose.

Under the Roman system the army was both the military and the police force; so far as its presence in Palestine was concerned it was a guard holding down the population that else would have been in open rebellion, and only in a limited sense did it correspond with the police force as we know it in England. It is very noticeable that, so far as we know, Jesus never told any soldier to leave the Army. He never compelled any by authority; and yet, to the best of our knowledge, "with one or two possible exceptions no soldier joined the Church and remained a soldier until the time of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161–180)."[2] Jesus would appeal to conviction only. In this case he attacked the system directly, because his discipleship was

[1] I do not wish to deny that redemption may come through the law court; but the law court is instituted by society for purposes of self-preservation, not of redemption.

[2] See a careful and learned study of the whole question in *The Early Christian Attitude to War*, C. J. Cadoux, D.D. (Swarthmore Press).

inconsistent with it. At the same time he never attacked it as a *system*, and he sought to overthrow it only by calling his disciples out of it as by their own insight they realised what his discipleship meant.

For Jesus every human personality was of *infinite* value.[1] Therefore he never treated any man as "a member of the lower classes" or as "a Roman" or as a type, but always as an individual, a particular person, a dear brother; therefore also he would never use any man as a mere tool; for that would involve a disrespect of his personality as a child of God. "I had often used, with the Sunday glibness of the tired priest, whose duty it is to preach three sermons in one day, the old simile of the chess-board. God and the Devil were the players; and we were helping one side or the other. But until that night I had not thought of the possibility of my being only a pawn in the game, that God might throw away that the game might be won." Now it is of the very essence of the thought of Jesus that God never treats any man as a mere pawn in a game; all God's dealings with his children are personal,[2] and therefore all men's dealings with

[1] It is one of the proofs of the finality of Christianity that in it there is no conflict between the individual and the whole. Every soul has an absolute worth in virtue of the fact that it may be consciously and spiritually related to the whole Universe.

[2] By this it is not meant that every event that befalls us is of God's personal ordering; but in every event God has a personal meaning and word to impart to us if we will receive it. The sphere of "natural law" is an impersonal or subpersonal order. This natural order vindicates right. It does so because a system that is righteous is the necessary condition for personal happiness; God is seeking personally to put us in line with the natural order. But there is no ultimate divorce between the natural order and the sphere of grace, because we do not really respond to the true meaning of our environment in the natural order (God's call to us through

one another are to be personal as far as possible; and although it is not possible for us to have a personal and particular knowledge of all those to whom we are linked in the complex life of the modern world, yet it is the first rule of morality never to treat anybody as if he were a mere convenience or instrument and less than a person. For instance, it may be that I cannot know all those who are employed at the laundry where my shirts are washed, but I can refuse to send my shirts to that laundry if I know the employees there are not being treated as human beings. It is one of the hardest and most necessary tasks of thought to realise that classes, nations and types are abstractions. Just as there is no such thing in reality as a purely " typical man," so there is no such thing as a postman or a grocer or a miner or a transport worker who is just that and nothing else; to treat men " in the mass," whether as " proletariat " or " capitalists " or " Germans " in a spirit and manner in which we would not think it right to treat them as individuals is always the denial of Christ's spirit. He calls us out of these abstract mass-judgments as through his spirit we see reality.[1]

any set of circumstances) until through it we are in a personal relation to God. Physical nature reacts against iniquity; modern medical psychology has shown beyond cavil that we cannot cheat the subconscious. See further Halliday, *op. cit.*, chh. vi. and vii., and my *Open Light*, chh. iii. and iv.

[1] I do not mean to assert that a person is a mere individual and that there is no reality underlying class names. But there is no reality in " proletariat " or " British Empire " or " Christian Church " apart from their constituent members. Nominalists and Realists are both at fault. Our Lord refused to look at the problems of his day in terms of " frontiers " or " political ideals "; the whole question with him was a personal relationship between

In the same way Jesus never attacked slavery as a system, and for this good reason, that when a slave-owner became a Christian he ceased to own slaves, whatever the law might say to the contrary; for those of his household were no longer slaves. The same thing will be found to be true in Christian homes with regard to servants and employees; when a master and mistress become Christian, their whole relationship to their servants becomes different, for they come to value persons not by the task which they do but by the soul that they bring to it; and need, in so far as it can be satisfied, becomes a right.

Thus we are not in the least surprised that there is no word recorded of Christ concerning the slave system as a system. At the same time nothing can be more plain than that Christianity means the abolition of slavery, not by an attack upon it after the fashion of the American civil war but by the kind of inward abolition which we see at work in the case of Philemon and Onesimus and in the life and testimony of John Woolman. The American War of Independence destroys the system but does not solve the problem. John Woolman, as much as Paul, was solving the problem in the conversion of the master and the slave.

What, then, was the attitude of Jesus to the political and economic regime under which he lived? We may note at the outset that he made no attempt to contract out of the system. The Roman

man and man—that is, a right relating of the individual to the whole, in which relating is expressed the will of God. *For him personality was the only absolute value.* In the piping days of peace the Churches have professed to hold this view; but in the testing of Jordan they have never held it.

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Empire was a military despotism, a heathen dominion, holding down the Jews by force and collecting taxes from them to be spent not only upon provincial administration but on the upkeep of the Army, the provision of gladiatorial shows, the building of heathen temples and the like. When they asked him point blank whether he would advise them to pay taxes to Cæsar, his answer was obscure, and possibly was primarily an *argumentum ad hominem*,[1] but it is perfectly plain that he did not refuse to allow the payment of taxes and that his method of destroying the system was not that which refusal to pay taxes would involve. We have no reason to think that Jesus called upon Zacchæus to give up his business or to refuse to work the system. The last chapter made it plain, however, that he was no Quietist, and that his method though different was as much a challenge and an offensive as that of the Zealots.[2]

III. Violence and Coercion

But it will be well to turn our attention to the two instances often alleged to show that Jesus definitely attacked the system as such; the one instance is his "denunciation" of the Pharisees, the other his cleansing of the Temple courts. These incidents are supposed to show that although Jesus usually worked by the personal method of per-

[1] I suggest tentatively that he meant "give to Cæsar Cæsar's penny and to God God's penny" with reference to Gen. i. 26.

[2] For a discussion of difficult problems in connection with "compromise" and the Christian's attitude to legal compulsion and national loyalties see further *Christ and Cæsar*, by N. Micklem and H. Morgan, pp. 128 ff, 134 ff, 152 ff, 225 ff.

suasion and moral force, he was not in principle opposed to violence; and in this connection we may discuss the view that while for the most part he confined himself to the gentle way, yet there was ever the threat latent that if his way were not taken God would intervene very forcibly with judgment and destruction.

(*a*) We have defined Jesus' one motive as that of redeeming love. His problem therefore was, how are the Pharisees to be redeemed? To understand his method with them we must assume that they were, as he said, "hypocrites," that is, play-actors; they were playing a part; they were refusing to look at reality; they had lost moral perspective and moral sincerity. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is *camouflage*." Now no man can be redeemed except upon a basis of truth and reality; he must face the facts about his own life. How could the Pharisees be brought to do this? Very different was the situation of the woman that was a sinner, of Zacchæus, of the outcasts of society; these were in no illusion as regards their life and its realities; they were facing the facts; therefore it was that Christ could say of them to the Pharisees, "the publicans and sinners go into the kingdom before you." But before he could begin to help the Pharisee, he must unveil him to himself; he must make him face reality; and this was the intended end of all he said to such. Is it becoming to think of Christ as losing his temper and blazing out in a fierce torrent of denunciation? Is not Miss Dougall right in suggesting that he "denounced" the Pharisees "in exactly that temper in which he wept over Jerusalem"? [1]

[1] *God and the Struggle for Existence*, S. C. M., p. 149.

The " woe " over the Pharisees, like the " woe " over " those that are with child in those days," is a human cry of sorrow, not a divine imprecation of wrath and destruction. Jesus cried " woe " over the Pharisees as he might have cried " woe " over the people of Belgium; for truly their lot was terrible.

To unveil the Pharisees was the only way of love and of redemption. But it is also true that there was an element of coercion in his handling of them. His " denunciation " was public; he appealed to public opinion; he said to them in effect, " If you insist on keeping up this game, the truth about you shall be spoken; all the cards shall be on the table; so far as I can, I will leave you isolated and without popular support." There is an element of moral coercion in this; but it is the moral coercion of truth; it is not unfair pressure; it is quite distinct from violence.

(*b*) The cleansing of the Temple raises a more serious problem, both as to what exactly happened and as to the significance of what Jesus did. The question is somewhat complicated by textual or critical difficulties into which it is not necessary to enter here. We shall assume, then, that either at the beginning or much more probably at the end of his ministry Jesus entered the Temple, found the buying and selling going on in the sacred precincts, and cleared the Temple courts in indignation. We may first note that the " whip," which has been a more dangerous and destructive weapon in the hands of theologians than ever it was in the hands of Jesus, was an ox-goad and may have been very needful for driving out the cattle; it seems necessary to observe further that an ox-

goad is not a bullet. What Jesus did is not more significant than what manifestly he did not do. Clearly he did not rush in with a whip and taking the merchants and money-changers at unawares slash at them with his knotted thongs and hurl them out swearing and cursing and brow-beaten; as certainly he did not gather his disciples and followers together and raise a riot and overcome these men and so clear the court. Not only is there no evidence for such "free fights" as these, not only would they have been prevented by the Temple police, but such incidents are morally incredible in connection with all that we know else of him. Nor, on the other hand, did he attack the system as such; he did not say, "This is an evil system, but as individuals we are powerless; we must get up an organised protest and opposition, and if need be we must compel the authorities to abolish the system." No, what he did was in effect to say, "As for me and all who stand with me, we can have nothing to do with this profanation of God's house, and I call upon you to depart," and smitten with compunction these individual men slunk out. It was moral authority, moral compulsion if we will call it so, but not violence that forced them to go; they went freely. In this instance again it appears that Christ would have destroyed the system by bringing individuals out of it. He believed in direct and personal, not indirect and political action.

(*c*) We owe to the ethical confusion of war-time the suggestion that the destruction of Jerusalem was Christ's answer to those who did him to death, that his prayer on the Cross for his enemies was not answered, but that afterwards (his mind

changing, we presume) he, as moral Governor of the Universe, avenged his crucifixion by the appalling horrors of A.D. 70.[1]

This notion shines best in its own light without comment, but we may consider at greater length the query which may be raised in many minds, was not the gentle and personal appeal of Jesus to the Jews a final appeal to them lest God's anger fall upon them? If this were so, the divine method will be to use persuasion first, and, if that fail, to employ force in the last resort. This kind of notion has obtained wide circulation in all ages in orthodox Christian circles; it lies behind the thought of the older theologies that Christ came to save men from God instead of from themselves to God. Here we may briefly face the question, what exactly was it that Christ threatened or feared for his people and the world? When he wept over Jerusalem, which knew not the day of her visitation and the things that belonged unto her peace, he manifestly read the signs of the times, and saw that if Jerusalem rejected him and chose Barabbas as Saviour, the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish nation as a nation was inevitable. But such a consummation was not the infliction of an angry God but the inevitable working out of the natural order of the world, which is a moral order. But what of the Last Judgment, the legions of angels, the division of the sheep and the goats, the great white throne, the fire unquenchable? Does not God use force in the end? It may again be observed here that God cannot be a case of dual personality, that the language of the New

[1] *Cf.* P. T. Forsyth, D.D., *The Christian Ethic of War* (Longmans), p. 87 *et passim.*

Testament Apocalyptic is manifestly metaphorical and difficult, and that the interpretation of it must be not inconsistent with all else that we know of the mind of Christ. It remains quite certain that if the motive of Christ on earth was never the vindication of justice by penalty but always redemptive love, that motive operates beyond the confines of this world; and if personality is such that it cannot be forced and coerced to that which God desires, that inability remains as long as personality remains. From the very nature of the case violence cannot accomplish God's purposes, and all his dealings with the soul must be in endless love. First, then, God's motive and character cannot change, therefore his motive remains redeeming love; and second, the essential nature of personality cannot change, therefore to the end of the story force and violence must ever fail to achieve his ends.[1]

IV. Reconciliation

The modern world is engaged with problems of unparalleled complexity in politics, economics, industry, and social organisation and adjustment:

> The times are wild; contention, like a horse
> Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose
> And bears down all before him.

Men are eagerly searching the pages of the New Testament to see if Jesus has any light to cast upon

[1] But it should always be remembered that God's redeeming love was prepared to pay the price of Calvary; it is therefore not sentimentality and weakness but rather the only mode of omnipotence relative to free beings, see *supra*, p. 60. For a fuller discussion of "The Last Things" see my *Open Light*, ch. v.

their perplexities. What, then, is the upshot of this discussion? In one sense it is disappointing: Jesus never considered the problems of which we are cognisant, and offered no legislation that would deal with them. Even the general principles which he laid down can by no means be applied by rule of thumb. That "men of worth o'er all the earth should brothers be" is an ideal accepted by all good men; but how are we to express brotherhood, and, more particularly, how are we to express it in the complex world of politics and industry?

The help that we get from the New Testament is primarily not in any solution that is indicated for our specific problems but in a new setting in which we are to look at them. In so far as we are Christ's disciples, we know no motive in our dealings with the wrongdoer but that of redeeming love; we love men not in the mass but as individuals. If we find ourselves faced with the iniquity of a foreign Government or of selfish and cruel employers or tyrannous workmen or apple-stealing boys, we are not told explicitly in the New Testament whether we should resort to war or to a strike or to a lock-out or to the machinery of the law courts or prison; but we are told that our attitude to wrongdoers must be always that of personal love,[1] and it is little to be wondered at if in the present imperfect stage of our moral insight men differ widely from one another in their judgment as to what in any given case is the redeeming thing to do; but the motive and the end are clear, and we are not to adopt means which stultify the end.

[1] Love here is obviously not a mere emotion but is based upon a moral estimate of what personality essentially is and of what it can become.

But Christ not only changes our motives, he also deepens our insight into the real nature of our problems. People sometimes speak as if we could solve our international problems by some balancing of armies and navies, some satisfactory arrangements about tariffs and markets, some delimitation of frontiers. It is sometimes represented to us that we can solve our industrial problems by an adjustment of wages and hours and profits, and that the kingdom of heaven could be established on earth by a wise and eloquent lawgiver. As well suggest that an unhappy and divided home can be healed by a more equitable division of the cake and an increased arm-chair service! Jesus enables us to see more deeply into things than that. For all these problems of politics and industry and economics are in the last resort problems of personal relationships, and there is no solution of them that is not in terms of personal reconciliation and understanding.

A working arrangement, an armed neutrality, a more or less permanent truce are possible sometimes without a change of heart; but in the present turmoil of the world not even a truce seems possible upon these terms. For instance, more than one equitable solution might well be suggested to rectify the anomalies and scandals of our present industrial order, but in the present state of mutual suspicion and exasperation between employers and employed what hope is there that any scheme will be accepted as more than a phase in the struggle? Or again, there is "Ireland"! It is not unlikely that several fair and practicable schemes for the settlement of Ireland might be tabled, but what hope has any of them to be accepted in the present estrange-

ment of men from one another in that unhappy land? What hope of international peace is there when any nation, whether victorious or conquered, is set upon revenge?

Where men feel brotherly towards one another, they will quickly find means to express their brotherhood in the world of economics and politics and industry; where men are not ready to live as brothers, members of one family, any economic or political scheme can be no more than a truce; the ashes are white on top perhaps, but the fires still smoulder underneath. Therefore fundamentally the present duty of a follower of Christ is clear: he will see that all these perplexing, overwhelming problems are in the last resort problems of human fellowship or reconciliation, and therefore seeking in every way he can to act brotherly towards all men and to live in that spirit which if it were universally accepted would mean perfect peace and happiness on earth, he will set himself to awaken that insight and that spirit in others, and in so doing will be prepared to be misunderstood and to bear his cross. In every situation he must seek first that which the "foreign missionary" seeks to do abroad; for there is in reality no true distinction between "home" and "abroad"; only on the basis of true religion is there hope for the whole world or for any section in it.

CHAPTER VI

JESUS AS SON OF GOD

Does God love,
And will ye hold that truth against the world ?
R. BROWNING

I. "Reflecting his Glory and Stamped with his Character"

"All things," said Jesus (meaning all that is involved in the revelation of God to man),[1] "are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The subject of this chapter is Jesus as the Son or revealer or revelation of God.

The Christian doctrine of God is perfectly simple; in the form in which I shall state it, I doubt not it will be accepted by all Christians; yet it is hardly ever taken seriously. The Christian doctrine is that Jesus is "the express image" of the Father; in other words, if we would know what God is like we must set our eyes upon Jesus Christ; God is eternally what Jesus was in time. This

[1] So Denney. See his *Jesus and the Gospel* (Hodder & Stoughton), pp. 265–277, for a discussion of the whole passage and a vindication of its authenticity.

notion is perfectly simple; one need not be a theologian or a mystic to understand it; indeed, it would almost appear as if one must be a theologian or a mystic in order to misunderstand it! It is simple and is often revealed unto "babes" when it is hidden from the "wise and prudent." As illustration let me take some of the early verses of the famous Athanasian creed:

"The Catholick faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. . . . As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible . . ."

If one were to say to me, in the course of conversation, "I wish I knew your mother; what is she like? do tell me about her," I might answer, "Certainly I will tell you about her; she is a dolichocephalic female biped of the anthropoid variety." That might be true, but it would give you a very inadequate impression of my mother! What the "Athanasian Creed" says about God may be true in some dim and remote and scholastic kind of way, but the unlettered peasant who knows and believes that God is like Jesus is wiser than the mere scholastics.

It should not be necessary to make clear that we have no duty to disparage theologians or minimise the need for exact thinking in religion. But two points in this connection need due stress: first, that Christianity in the last resort is not a complicated, speculative system but a simple relationship between God and the human soul; and, second, that the essential qualification in our search for truth in religion is not a subtle, tortuous intellect but an open and sincere and humble mind.[1] Though the Christian thought of God is so simple that any one can grasp it, I am persuaded that the notions of God prevalent amongst professing Christians to-day are quite chaotic; and this I judge not from the formal statements people make but from their casual remarks; for though they confess outwardly that God is a Father, they expect him to do things which a human father would only do with a sense of failure; and though they confess outwardly that God is like Jesus, they believe that he does things which they could never imagine Jesus doing. "God moves in a mysterious way," we sing; we say that the ways of Providence are past finding out; we say "it pleased God in his mercy to cut off so-and-so in his prime" or "to prevent so-and-so from going on board a ship that was torpedoed" (but apparently it did not please God in his mercy to keep the others from going on board); or when lightning comes and strikes some poor body dead, we call it an "act of God"; in all these ways and many others we show that in spite of all our professions we do not seriously believe that God is like Jesus

[1] As I have been a little misunderstood on this point I may be allowed to refer further to my *Open Light*, ch. ii., and my *First Century Letter*, pp. 17–25.

Christ. Now it is quite true that "God's ways are not as our ways," but that is not because his ways are mysterious and because it is right for him to do things which it would be cruel for us to do, but because his ways are all in love and ours are not; it is the very end and purpose of religion that our ways *should* be as his ways, and indeed our "growth in grace" is simply our increasing understanding and experience of what is involved in the truth that Jesus is the revelation of God.

But, it may be objected, though God is unquestionably and primarily the Father, is he not other things as well? for instance, is he not also Judge? Let us consider that for a moment. When we utter the word "judge," the associations it summons up are the dock and the bench, the serjeant-at-arms, the counsel for the prosecution, the quill pens and the wigs, with all the paraphernalia of the police court or the county assize. But can all these things afford a true background for our thought of God? Are those the associations that the name Jesus conjures up? May not the Bible be right when it says that "this is judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light"?

I do not mean to suggest that it is absolutely untrue to say that God is a Judge, but it is untrue in the law-court sense of the term. If we desire to know in what way God is a Judge, we must ask in what way Jesus was a Judge; and the answer is that Jesus was a Judge not because he sat on the bench and gave sentences of so many months and so much hard labour or so much hell-fire, but because he made men see the simple, naked truth about themselves, he unveiled men to themselves. Does this con-

ception take away all terror from the thought of judgment to come? It takes away the terror of falling into the hands of an angry and affronted God who has ceased to love his child, a God therefore whom, because he would be less than our own ideal, we could never really worship but only fear. But could any judgment of an affronted God upon the judgment seat be so terrible as the self-judgment of a man who, facing at last the facts of his own life and contemplating the ruin of his home through his own selfishness and sin and the misery he has brought upon others and feeling himself chained to selfish isolating passions and at the mercy of a thirst which never can be satisfied, sees what life might have been, and knows he is in hell?

> Is it, if Heaven the future showed,
> Is it the all-severest mode
> To see ourselves with the eyes of God?
> God rather grant, at his assize,
> He see us not with our own eyes!

And we may well ask whether hell itself can separate from the love of God that is in Christ. "If I ascend into heaven, behold thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there also."

Again, in the army it is quite a serious offence to go about with the top button undone or to wear the hair beyond the regulation length, and to the private soldier there appears to be a hierarchy of officials, ascending to the Provost Marshal himself, whose business it is to take offence at such things and to visit penalties upon him. There are Christian people who profess to believe that God is a Father with a Father's love, and yet

who act on the assumption that he is a kind of Provost Marshal in heaven ever ready to visit upon them their formal and often unintentional offences. They think that if they spill the salt or eat flesh on Friday[1] or sit down in church with their hat on or omit to get their baby baptised or read a newspaper on Sunday, God will be angry and ill-fortune will betide them—ill-fortune: observe that it is Fortune, an old heathen goddess, they believe in, not the God revealed in Jesus. And there are many people who are not grossly superstitious in this way, who yet pass all their days in fear lest they have unwittingly committed or may unwittingly commit some mortal sin, and who all the while are just a little afraid of God, as if he were generally well-disposed and loving but a trifle uncertain in temper and quick to be offended if accidentally one break the rules of the game which one did not really understand; and so they are never children in their Father's house; they are visitors on their best behaviour and in their Sunday clothes and too nervous to laugh heartily and dreadfully afraid of spilling the soup or choking over the porridge.

"There is something about your way of looking at things which I like" (writes Parson John to Miriam Gray).[2] "Many of the religious people that I know, when they talk of religion, have a bedside manner and walk about in felt slippers. And if they speak of God, they always tidy themselves first. But you go in and out of all the rooms in God's

[1] No doubt many people do this reverently and as a memorial, but with many others it is sheer superstition.

[2] In a most inspired pamphlet, *God in Everything* (Epworth Press).

house as though you were quite at home. You open the doors without knocking, and you hum on the stairs, and it isn't always hymns either. My aunt thinks you are not quite reverent; but, then, she can keep felt slippers on her mind without any trouble."

I hope this picture will not seem profane to any. It is true that God is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," dwelling "in the light which no man can approach unto," yet it is his glory to dwell "with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit"; and the greatest glory of God, as of Jesus, is not his power and his kingship but his humility and sacrificial love. It is no true reverence to allow the vast spaces of the Universe or the thought of a thousand generations to overawe our minds; the soul of man is greater than all the material Universe; he may proudly say,

> Though fortune's malice overthrow my state,
> My mind exceeds the compass of her wheel.

We must reinterpret reverence in terms of home life and family relationships. A son truly and rightly reverences his father not because he has riches and lands and servants, but because of his fatherly love and the beauty of what he is in his own soul. A son's reverence does not make him awkward and ill at ease. An affected familiarity with God is infinitely horrible, but it is not wrong to take seriously the claim of Christ that we are to be children in a Father's house, and it is not of blasphemy but of the highest reverence to say that God is like Jesus Christ, for there is nothing more

deserving of worship and heart's reverence that we can say of him.

But finally it may be objected that on any showing God is King as well as Father, for Jesus, who reflected the likeness of God, is the Lord of "the kingdom," the Messiah, "the King of the Jews." Yes, but what kind of a king is God? Is he like an oriental Sultan or like the Queen in *Alice*, who was always saying "off with his head!" when anybody displeased her? or is he like a constitutional monarch, surrounded by a court and splendid officials, who rules by the machinery of the law court or in the last resort by his army? We must remember that kingship is a temporary and changing institution; it belongs to a phase of human society; it does not belong, like fatherhood, to the eternal order of things, and we must be careful how we apply these very human symbols to God. And Jesus himself warns us here. "They that are in authority among the Gentiles," he says, "lord it over them, and their rulers are called Benefactors! but so it shall not be among you." Why not? Because rule and authority are not of that kind in the eternal order, and God himself does not "lord it over us" as the rulers of the Gentiles do; he is not careful of his privileges and jealous of his "rights" and always looking for the "deference" of his inferiors. If we would know the kind of worship that God asks of us, we must look at Jesus. Jesus (if we may speak in plain colloquial language) did not look to men to "touch their caps" to him in distant deference and call him "good Master"; no, "he that doeth the will of my father, the same is my mother, my sister, my brother." He sought the love of men, not their distant defer-

ence; he would have all men for his brethren, and God would have all men for his children.

Consider the relevance of all this to public worship. God does not seek worship after the pattern of a human court; he is not concerned with splendid robes and humble "genuflections" and the smell of incense, nor that men should cast themselves upon the ground in an ecstasy of "adoration." He could not be king after that fashion; but "this is the true ritual before God and undefiled, to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." We praise God for what he is and for what he has done and shall yet do, we love him because he first loved us, but we worship him not remote in the sanctuary but in the common ways of life by standing for the things for which Jesus stood and serving our brother for his sake.

God is king indeed, but he does not "lord it over us" as the rulers of the Gentiles do; he reigns in our hearts not because he is splendid and far removed from our common life, but because we know he is the "friend of publicans and sinners"; not because he is omnipotent, but because he calls upon us to be unselfish even as he is; not because he is a great Potentate, self-sufficient and needing nothing, but because he cannot be satisfied till all his children are at one with him. How utterly Christian thought has gone astray because we have thought the kingship of God to be like the human kingship which we know!

II. Cæsarea Philippi

When we are thinking about God's nature, there is an incident in the life of Christ which has not

received all the attention it deserves from Christian people. The days of the first popularity in Galilee are over; Jesus is practically a refugee outside the borders of Palestine proper; he is with his few followers among the mountains near to the new city of Cæsarea Philippi. We do not know the exact spot where the ensuing conversation took place, but, quite possibly, looking up from where they sat, they could see aloft the great white temple of Cæsar Augustus, the symbol of the worship of might and majesty and dominion and power and the other qualities which men worshipped then as they worship them still.[1] There we may picture it massive and white in the morning sun. Lower down amid the red rocks of that country and possibly within sight of Jesus and his disciples was a vast grotto sacred to the Greek god, Pan. Pan was the god of natural high spirits and *joie de vivre*, of ecstatic, mystical religion. From his name comes our word "panic"; when under stress of fear men lose control of themselves and are swept away, we say they suffer from panic. In the ancient pagan world of that day but two alternatives seemed to lie open, either submission to the great inexorable powers or escape by way of mystic experience and ecstasy; the world was no Father's house to the ordering of which his children might be reconciled. Here it was that Jesus asked his disciples what the world said of him and what they said of him, and here he received Peter's confession, "You are Messiah," the anointed one of God, our King.

Scarcely were the words out of Peter's mouth,

[1] Here it was that thirty-five years later Titus Cæsar celebrated his triumph over Israel and Jerusalem with hecatombs of offerings and with human sacrifices (in gladiatorial games).

when Jesus began to tell them, as it appears for the first time, that "the Son of Man must suffer many things and be crucified"; and Peter begged him not to talk like that; the thing was unthinkable, he said. But Jesus, looking not at Peter, I think, but beyond Peter and facing again the temptation to avoid the Cross, said, "Get thee behind me, Satan"; then turning to Peter he said, "You are not thinking God's thoughts but man's thoughts."[1] In other words, in trying to prevent Jesus from talking about suffering and the Cross Peter was quite misunderstanding God; he was thinking of the way Cæsar ruled, not the way God rules. Cæsar ruled from without by his legal codes and his centurions and legions; God rules from within; he wins the love of his children by "commending" his own great love; and love means suffering. When any broke Cæsar's law he could easily have them crucified, and it mattered nothing to him; but when any breaks the Father's law, the Cross is in the Father's heart until the erring child return heart-broken as the Father was. I think it was Joseph Parker who described sin as "a raised fist, a clenched hand and a blow in the face of God."

III. "Who Gives to all Men without Question or Reproach"

Look farther into Jesus' thought of God. The most distinctive thing about Christianity is not, in general, the ethical ideas that Jesus taught, but rather his attitude to his enemies and to those who did not want him. There had been many

[1] The language of the A.V. needlessly obscures the sense.

teachers anxious to instruct those who would learn from them; there had been many righteous persons in whose eyes the common people were accursed, not knowing the law; there had been many who, from the motives of Deuteronomy or the Buddha, inculcated the kindly and merciful spirit; there had been Socrates and the saints who would not do injustice, come life, come death. Jesus was like none of these; his motive was not impersonal righteousness but personal righteousness which is love; he had set his heart on men and would take no refusal from them. In the thought of Jesus, God is he who sends his sun and his rain upon the just and the unjust, who gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not, who has no favourites, who loves all the children of men. That is also Jesus' attitude to them. His mission he conceived as especially to "the sick," "the lost sheep," "sinners"; that is to say, he comes to seek fellowship with the unattractive, the unlovely, the not-wanted. And when men would not have him, he would have them, would never leave them. His agony in Gethsemane was not the fear of death but agony over those to whom he had brought love and they had rejected it; on his way to the Cross he was thinking of them, not of himself: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me." In the hour of his death he cannot get his mind off the men who were rejecting him: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

We say his life was perfect because his love was perfect: he was love. It was this spirit which lies behind some of the sayings in the Sermon on the Mount which cause the modern mind the most perplexity, namely, an infinite forgivingness and

longing, before all things, to be reconciled. Property and dignity matter nothing compared to the restoring of the right relationship. The Christian must seek at-one-ment with the man who would take his coat, with his enemy, his persecutor or his slanderer; and the loss of property or time or comfort is a very little thing; the great and splendid victory is to overcome evil by good.

We are now in a position to see that that part of the teaching of Jesus which is sometimes represented as most Utopian and impossible of attainment in this world belongs to the normal life of Christians and constitutes in large measure what it means to be a Christian. If we love them that love us, we do but as the Gentiles do; we are still in the natural order. But to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, is to do what God does; it is what it means to be in the eternal order; it is not the crown and summit of Christianity, it is the very meaning of Christianity; it involves that we have forgotten about self in the love of others, that we have no interest but to redeem, that our love is not altered by men's hate. That is the gospel of the Cross—not a piece of wood whose splinters will work miracles, not the outward sufferings, the agonised figure of the Crucifix, not some cosmic transaction whereby God's wrath is satisfied, but the revelation of a love that no hatred can overcome. It is the ultimate victory of love over all that hate can do.

IV. "A Corner-stone in Zion"

If men will walk by this rule they must take the consequences. The Cross is deep-rooted in the

Sermon on the Mount; the ethics of that sermon are not practicable to the man who will not bear his cross. The best commentary on the sermon is the life of Jesus; and "the Son doeth nothing but what he seeth the Father doing." Jesus stood for the things for which he saw God stand; he was in time what God is eternally.

Jesus showed men reality, reality about themselves, reality about God, reality about life. Those men looked into the soul of Jesus, and there they saw God as he is; they saw, too, themselves as God sees them; they began to see others with Jesus' eyes, and to love as Jesus loved; his spirit came upon them; they dwelt now in a new world, in which the central sun was the amazing, self-forgetful, unlimited love of God, in which the old life of self had no relish left for them, and in which their life henceforward was to stand for the things for which Jesus stood and to impersonate him. So we find Stephen dying with almost the Master's words upon his lips and the Master's spirit in his heart: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." This is Christianity. "Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears." [1] "Whoso hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

We are here in a realm far above mere orthodoxy and conventional morality; to live "in Christ" is to live this life of self-forgetful love; it is the very life of God; it is that "eternal life" which,

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 4-8 (Moffatt's translation).

because it is God's, is for ever; its circumstances may change, its essence cannot. Man is at one with God; his life is unified in God; he seeks fellowship with all mankind in God.

The observant reader will not fail to see that this simple and not novel interpretation of Christianity involves a complete philosophy. The task of working out in detail what is involved in this fact of Jesus is beyond the scope of this slender volume; but we may indicate here that all errors in theology, all illegitimate methods of worship or service, may be traced back to a false or imperfect idea of God. Seeking to know God we shall set our eyes upon Jesus to the exclusion of all inferior persons and all created things; our first and last principle shall be this, that God was in Christ, that *Jesus is the final revelation of what God is.* This is no new principle; but it has never been made normal and regulative for the whole of theology. Not only popular ideas of God but many liturgies and many theologies start from God as king, schoolmaster, magistrate, instead of from the God and Father of Jesus.

It will readily be seen that this principle, that God is finally revealed in Jesus, simple and nominally accepted as it is, must act as a revolutionary force if applied to the current Christianity: (i) to theologies which start from the majesty of God, or his justice or "righteousness"; for we do not find Jesus standing upon his dignity nor being interested in vindicating an external moral order, but in saving human beings from their sins; (ii) to current modes of worship, stately and formal liturgies breathing the language of the court rather than of the home, prayers for victory in

war by whomsoever offered—for God is Father truly and King only in metaphor, and the weapons of his war are spiritual; (iii) to ethics, for if God be revealed in Jesus, Christian ethics are not negative commandments nor conventional morals but the great crusade of love; (iv) to Church life, for the Church must be less of an institution and much more of a great brotherhood or family; (v) to Church methods, for the way of Jesus is the road of love and personal service and the seeking of fellowship. All the blots and blemishes, failures and disloyalties which have made "the Churches" so often a by-word and a hissing and have caused them to hide Jesus from the people instead of revealing him, have been due to using worldly methods, living by worldly standards and by distorted thoughts of God.

Yet there is no hope for this broken body of humanity except through a Church of Jesus—that is, a company of men and women who believe utterly in him and are prepared to stand for him. We must cease to utter the pathetic formula that, if only the world would accept the principles of Jesus, all would be happy and all would be peaceful. Of course that is true; but men can be won but singly into that kingdom where Christ reigns, not by mass methods but by personal ministries of love and friendship. We must set to work. The problem before the world is how we can live side by side and at peace, not with those with whom we have a natural affinity, but with those whom naturally we dislike and by whom we are repelled; there are class antagonisms, race antagonisms, colour antagonisms, and these constitute the problems of the modern world. Jesus has the solution, and there is none other. He could make friends and

brothers of Matthew the *publican* and Simon the *Zealot*; his love broke down "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, and there is no deeper cleavage in the modern world than this was, neither between Briton and German, nor between white man and yellow man. For the love of Jesus knows no barrier, and he who shares the love of Jesus sees all men with new eyes and allows no more likes and dislikes of his own and lives for service and calls no man enemy. Men have been at work on war, but it is love and the adventures of love which shall hold their hearts when they see Jesus. For God was in Christ, reconciling men unto himself and unto one another and unto their lot.

CHAPTER VII

JESUS AS TEACHER

And not for signs in heaven above
  Or earth below they look,
Who know with John his smile of love,
  With Peter his rebuke.

In joy of inward peace or sense
  Of sorrow over sin
He is his own best evidence,
  His witness is within.

And warm, sweet, tender, even yet
  A present help is he,
And faith has still its Olivet,
  And love its Galilee.

J. G. WHITTIER.

I. Authority in Religion

The subject of this chapter is not so much the content of the teaching of Jesus as its method, though the two are not really to be separated. We shall, however, get insight into the nature of religion if we observe how Jesus set about his work as teacher. For according as is the subject matter, so must be the method; for instance, if it is your duty to teach students the elements of Russian grammar, you tell them to get the book, you go through it with them, and you assure them that

when they have mastered the book they have mastered the subject so far as it concerns them for the moment. But if you want to teach a boy to ride, it is no good to set him down to *The British Thoroughbred Horse* or to the textbooks of the veterinary schools; you must put him on a pony. Let us see, then, how Jesus taught men religion.

We may note first that Jesus himself wrote no book, and that he treated with great reverence but also with great freedom the book of religion which he received by tradition, namely, what we call the Old Testament. He never said that religion was written in a book, and that all that a man need do is to study and believe the book. That was the method of the scribes and Rabbis, as it has often been the method of Christian teachers, but it was not that of Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus was not in the line of the priestly tradition but of the prophetic. As we have said, there were two ways of regarding the Old Testament; men might take the view that the essential and most important part of it was the Mosaic Law with its prescribed rites and ceremonies, and that the prophets had written an interesting commentary on this which, however, was quite secondary to the Law itself. This was the attitude of the official religious leaders in Jesus' time. The other view was the reverse of this, namely, that the essential element in the Old Testament is the revelation of God that came through the prophets, that the value of the Law lay just in this, that originally at least it was prophetic, and that the value of the rites and ceremonies lay not at all in themselves, as if God cared about outward observances and forms and postures for their own sake, but in their mean-

ing—that is, in so far as they represented a living word which God had spoken to men through a prophetic soul. This was the attitude of Jesus; so he interpreted the Old Testament not according to the letter but according to the meaning. Thus he took the command, a tooth for a tooth, and instead of raising the question (in the spirit of the scribes and the literalists) what should be done if a toothless man knocked out his neighbour's tooth, he rather took the meaning of the command, namely, that private vengeance must be limited, and showed that its real meaning and fulfilment is that men shall put away vengefulness altogether. It will be noted that the authority of the prophets in their lifetime had never been that of a book, but always that of direct communion with God issuing in a message which they commended to the consciences of their contemporaries. Similarly the authority of Jesus was never that of a book, but it was the prophetic authority. In other words, he appealed to spiritual insight and conviction.

We are here entering upon a problem which in these days more than in most is exercising the hearts of men, namely, where can be found authority in religion? Men are saying, "I could understand the old Protestant position with its infallible book, as I can understand Catholicism with its infallible Church; but if you reject both these authorities, are you not embarked on a shoreless sea of uncertainty and 'private judgment'? where can you find that assurance for which the heart craves?" To meet this position some have argued that at any rate we have the sayings of Jesus himself to constitute a sure and sufficient guide. Now in justification of this it may be said that the so-called "higher

criticism" has, after the labours and winnowings of many years, given us a more clear and accurate picture of Jesus of Nazareth than any age has enjoyed since the first. At the same time, we have come to see that the stories and sayings that come down to us are but few out of many, that not every one of them can be regarded as an exact reminiscence, and that the context and meaning of others are highly obscure. But there is a far more fundamental objection to this method. It involves that we assume certain theories about the Person of Christ, and on the basis of that assumption we accept his words as infallibly inspired. But that was a way of teaching and of gaining acceptance that Jesus himself refused. He did not first go about trying to prove that he was Messiah, and then asking people to believe him because he was Messiah. On the contrary he put his teaching before men, and when it had commended itself to their consciences in its own light as a word of God, he asked the few "Whom say ye that I am?"

In other words, Jesus entirely refused to employ the pressure and hypnotism either of a book or of a great name in order to impress his teaching upon anybody; he appealed to insight, to conscience and to conviction. His message was not to be carried by any outward authority; truth is its own witness within. We can see that this was necessarily so. How many people looking at some aged wrinkled face painted by Rembrandt cry out, "Oh, what a beautiful picture!" not because they *see* it to be beautiful, but because they have been told that they are now looking at "an old master"! There can be no such merely conventional judgments in true religion. Jesus could have won a

ready hearing for his message if he would have given a "sign" in the sky; his prestige would have carried men away; but if men would not believe him because his words came home to their own consciences as true, he would have no other belief. His appeal was ever to insight and to conviction.[1]

But this is profoundly unsatisfactory to some people. They say that if there be no external authority in religion, they will be cast back upon "mere subjectivism" and be in like case with a well-known modern divine who was pilloried as one who

> Himself believing, could no reason see
> Why any other should believe, but he.

But in the long run what authority can there be in religion that is not an inward authority? We do not believe that the Pope or the verdict of the so-called "Undivided Church" or the Authorised Version is an infallible authority unless we have been hypnotised into an inward assurance that this authority must be infallible. What reason have we for asserting that the Pope or the Scripture is infallible except that we think so and that others think so too? These are "private" and "subjective" judgments. The only infallible authority in religion is the truth, the actual facts of the case, reality. We are much misled in supposing that because the witness of truth is inward, therefore it is "subjective." No external authority can

[1] Even to believe on Jesus because of the Resurrection, regarded as a mere miracle, is not of religious faith. If men do not believe in Jesus because they are persuaded that he is true and without falsehood, they cannot come to a true belief "though one rise from the dead."

prove that jazz music is inferior to Handel's minuets to the man who does not perceive it to be so; no man can prove that Nurse Cavell spoke a true word when she said that "patriotism is not enough" to the man who still thinks that patriotism is enough. Truth is its own authority; and the whole purpose of education, whether artistic or moral, is to enable us to perceive the truth for ourselves. But the judgment that Handel's music is superior to jazz, and that Nurse Cavell's statement was noble and true, is an inward judgment necessarily, but it is also "objective"—that is, it is true for all men everywhere in so far as they are æsthetically or morally educated, in so far as they are truly human or humane.

Men said about Jesus that he spoke "with authority and not as the scribes"; they did not mean that he claimed a great name and asked them to accept his words upon the authority of his external credentials; he did not say, "You common people cannot understand these things, but you may take it from me." On the contrary, they meant that his simple words went right home to their own consciences as true; the voice within bore witness to the voice without, and those who believed in him did so because in their hearts they were persuaded that he spoke the truth. Jesus made his appeal to the unsophisticated conscience, to the common people, to those whose minds and hearts were open to reality; and religion needs no external credential when there is complete sincerity and willingness to face reality. We cannot prove by any external authority that Jesus speaks the truth about life; but men in every land and every generation since his time, men of all varieties and stages

of culture who have been sincere, have accepted his authority for life, not because of a common temperament or common peculiarities but in virtue of their common humanity; he speaks as directly to our consciences and with the same unanswerable authority as a mother's love or the beauty of the sunrise.

II. The Awakening of Insight

Thus Jesus appealed only to insight and to conviction. From the nature of the Kingdom which was the content of his message it could not be otherwise. When we realise what "the kingdom of God" is, we see at once that men cannot be forced or cajoled or hustled into it. The phrase "the kingdom of God" is perhaps misleading to us. We must not think of a geographical kingdom like "Great Britain and Ireland" with its officers and authorities, its law courts and its police. Neither must we think of some far-off kingdom set aloft "in heaven" to be enjoyed after this life is over. What the kingdom is may best be indicated by an illustration. A busy and overworked clerk in a hot and stuffy London office will say, "When I am at my work I find myself tired and irritable and depressed, and I feel sometimes that life is hardly worth while, and I find my neighbours very difficult to get on with, and when I read the papers I get almost overwhelmed with despair. But when my holiday comes and I get away to the seaside with my wife and family and feel the fresh keen air and have rest and exercise and am among those whom I love, then I am an absolutely different person, all my irritability vanishes, I feel I can face life, I begin to see the good points in my

neighbours and colleagues and to think that perhaps I have judged them rather hardly, and when I read the paper, instead of feeling that the world is going to the dogs, I feel that there are very many people trying to put things right, I look at everybody and everything in a new light, I am really a new creature myself." If any man is in Christ Jesus, says Paul, he is a new creature; if any man is in the Kingdom of God, he is an entirely different person; he lives on in the same old world, and yet it is a different world to him; his neighbours instead of being a bore and an irritation have become brothers lovable and needing help and sympathy, his discomforts and weaknesses and disappointments have become opportunities for triumph and for victory; instead of being at the mercy of circumstances he is master of circumstances, and therefore all things work together for his good.

> O do not ask me how it came to pass;
> Enough that I am happy, that for me
> A greener emerald twinkles in the grass,
> A bluer sapphire melts into the sea.

To be in the Kingdom of God does not mean to be subject to a new code of laws, nor yet to be transplanted to a sphere outside this world, but to find this world a new place, to see all men in a new and kindlier light, to find the whole Universe, as George Fox said, give out a new scent; in other words, it is to find God in life and to become children in a Father's house. Now it stands to reason that this is a matter of insight and conviction; therefore Jesus set himself to kindle insight and to awaken men to the meaning of life and their own real happiness.

Thus Jesus not only repudiated the way of gaining followers by taking up the sword or by granting a "sign" in the sky; he also refused the way of meretricious eloquence and "painted rhetoric"; he would have no one enrol as his follower under the influence of a sudden excitement; a prospective disciple must sit down quietly and count the cost. But it is more than doubtful whether the Christian Churches have understood their Master in this regard. Not only have they sought for authority in external things in a book or in some Church pronouncement or in a creed, but they have also tried to win men by carrying them away on the wings of rhetoric, by well-advertised campaigns and by the hypnotism of organised revivals, forgetting that religion is not a state of feeling however exalted or however contrite but a new attitude to life and a quiet and free surrender to the meaning of life as revealed in Jesus Christ.

> There is no expeditious road
> To pack and label men for God,
> And save them by the barrel-load.

It may be that those whom the Churches regard with most satisfaction are not always those whom Jesus so regards.

> Some may perchance with strange surprise
> Have blundered into Paradise.
> In vasty dusk of life abroad,
> They fondly thought to err from God,
> Nor knew the circle that they trod;
> And, wandering all the night about,
> Found them at morn where they set out.
> Death dawned; Heaven lay in prospect wide:
> Lo! they were standing by his side!

III. The Place of Emotion in Religion

There was a missionary who when home on furlough and doing deputation work always refused to allow a collection to be taken after his address. On one occasion his host, a wealthy man, called him a fool. "Why," he said, "if you had passed round the hat after your address, I should have put in a five-pound note." But the missionary answered that he did not wish any man to give under the influence of a passing emotion; he wanted a man to sit down and think how much he ought to give and then quietly to give it. The rich man smiled and was not persuaded, but later, when he had thought it over, it was a hundred pounds he gave.

What, then, is the place of emotion in religion? There can be no insight without deep and strong emotion; no man can look at a sunset or at the old Residency at Lucknow or can watch a mother's love or can consider what the Cross stands for without being stirred and strangely moved. Here the emotion springs from insight into the meaning of that which has been seen. But often enough in religion as elsewhere men do not have emotion because they have seen some meaning in things, but they think they see things because they have emotion. We know how it is when we take children to some entertainment. They are on the tiptoe of excitement; long before the curtain goes up they are ready for anything; the entertainer has only to make the feeblest joke to get them laughing, and then he has them laughing the whole time. Grown-up people are not a bit better. The same psychological principle holds good in religion.

Get a mission hall full of expectant people, work upon their emotions, describe a certain experience, suggest to them that it will be theirs, and "conversions" are assured; people will see or feel something because they have been worked up and are expecting it or fighting against it. In the same way people constantly become "Catholics" not because of insight and conviction, but because they have allowed themselves to be hypnotised by the music and the incense and the "atmosphere."[1] In the same way the visions and ecstasies of the mystic are often enough pathological rather than inspired. These are all illustrations of the wrong place of emotion in religion.[2] False emotion clouds the judgment and is the fruitful source of illusion. Jesus never tried to work up emotion. True emotion follows from insight into the meaning of experience; the tears of the Magdalene were due to that which she had seen of Christ; when "Christian" had come to that "place somewhat ascending" and had seen what the Cross stands for and what it means, then "he looked therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the water down his cheeks." That was

[1] I do not wish to suggest that this is the only reason why people "go over" to Catholicism.

[2] All men have a certain, perhaps a limited, amount of emotional or psychic energy or, as it is technically called, *libido*, which must find expression as an interest in things. Some people through insight find the right things to be interested in, and then the *libido* has its true fulfilment, being spiritualised. Others having undefined feelings, which need expression, invent things or imagine things round which these emotions cling but which, because they are unreal, prevent real personal development. See further my *First Century Letter*, pp. 70 ff., 79 ff.

the emotion of insight into truth which is clean and wholesome and a power of God.

IV. Dependence and Independence

There are many who realise that the whole meaning of life for us is that we should be like Jesus Christ, that to be as he was, at home with God, loving the loveless, scorning none, kind to the unthankful, superior to all circumstances, inflexible to evil—this is blessedness, even though it involve laborious days and much contradiction and persecution "for righteousness' sake." But we incline to make a very great difference between the days when Christ moved as a man amongst men and our own days; to us he seems such a "dim and distant figure," and we wish that we could feel his presence as the disciples did.

> Jesus, these eyes have never seen
> That radiant form of Thine;
> The veil of sense hangs dark between
> Thy blessed face and mine.

Whatever may be true of religion in theory, we think that with Christ by us we might be religious, but left to ourselves and with him only as our distant teacher we are helpless and forlorn. But are we really left to ourselves, and in what sense is Jesus still our teacher to-day?

Our despondency comes largely from three causes: first, we tend to identify religion with feeling; second, our ways of thinking are material and unspiritual; and third, we are blind to our own real good. When we are at home, we are not always feeling warm pulses of affection. No doubt when

the family regathers at Christmas time or when one member is taken ill or is in some special trouble, then our love wells up as a feeling, and we are made aware of it; but normally and naturally we are not consciously feeling love; love rather is the very atmosphere we breathe, and it would be a serious matter if home meant a constant drain upon the emotions, so that we must needs go away from home for rest! It is love that makes home, not love as an overmastering sensation but as a constant attitude of the members of the family to one another, not transient as emotion but stronger than sin and death.

It is in the language of the home that we must interpret and state religion; and religion therefore does not consist in perpetual delicious raptures of feeling but in a life the very nature and meaning of which is love. When we "leave home" to find our place in the world, we are far away from the old house and the garden and all the familiar things. But not in them does home consist; there are many who have such-like and far more than we, and yet we should be quick to say that they have not a home like ours. For it is love and mutual understanding and fellowship that make home, and is there an end of these things when we "leave home"? May not a man say truly that in every thought that he thinks and every resolution that he makes his old home is revealed, and that his father is by his side? But the objection springs to our lips, "It is one thing to have that kind of feeling that your father is with you and quite another to be able to go up to him and put your hand in his and hear his voice." We must therefore look more deeply into this matter.

In a home we are dependent on one another—that is part of the meaning and joy of home; and inasmuch as our home goes with us all the way, we may truly say that there is an eternal element in this mutual dependence. But there is a wrong dependence as well as a right. A person who is helpless without father's or mother's presence can never grow up; to be tied "to a mother's apron strings" is properly regarded as a shame; one so tied remains a child to the end of the chapter and never can in the full sense attain to personality. So that while the meaning and joy of home seem to lie very much in the mutual dependence, it is not less true that every home is a failure where the children are not trained to be independent.

This is a little puzzling at first, yet it is not beyond the grasp of all who know what home can be, and it holds the key to one of the great problems of religion. We go "away from home," we have to judge for ourselves, plan for ourselves, live our own life, stand upon our own feet. We cannot run to our father or mother at every turn and lean upon them and let them decide for us, and we see that it would not be well for us if we could; and we may see, if we will, what trouble and even illness there is when unwise parents try to keep the children in the nursery, when the time for nursery-days is past.[1] And yet how we lean upon our parents! In every judgment that we make for ourselves we feel that they are beside us. When we are tempted to some mean or petty action, we remember our father and set aside the temptation. *We* set it aside; our father cannot do that for us; we are

[1] *Cf.* the so-called "paternal complex" in medical psychopathology.

independent and yet we are dependent upon him; *he* enables *us* to set it aside. And so our own moral independence is not inconsistent with, but really rests upon, our dependence.

The significance of this for religion is apparent. We sometimes say, "If only Jesus Christ were here near me, and I could speak to him, it would make all the difference to me." Perhaps it would, but it might mean that we should never grow up. In our hearts we do not believe that it was "expedient" for us that he should go away. But we see now that his going is expedient; we have to learn to be sons and daughters in God's house, not servants; and that means that while we are utterly dependent on him we must also stand upon our own feet and be independent. If we could run to Jesus as a child to its mother to be lifted up and carried and rescued without effort, we should never grow up to independence and to true freedom. And yet unless we had Jesus with us all the time to succour our weakness, we should be isolated and alone and never able to overcome.

Jesus is near to us as our earthly father is near to us and our heavenly Father; for personality is not spatial; he is nearer to us than if we could put out our hand and touch his robe, but not so as to make our decisions for us or to keep all temptations from us, but rather to stand by us and to strengthen and to succour us, if we will let him, in such wise as to enable us ourselves to make the right decision and overcome the evil temptation.

I see thee not, I hear thee not,
Yet art thou oft with me;
And earth has ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with thee.

Now this is the very heart of religion. Christians sometimes speak as if Jesus Christ were "specially" present on certain occasions, or as if there were "special" channels of communication between him and us of which we could avail ourselves. But that is a great illusion. There may be times when our emotions are particularly stirred, but, as we saw in the first chapter, there is no moment and no situation in life when Christ is not at our side to succour and to help us, if we will let him and allow his presence to be as the very air about us that we breathe.

When we speak of "special channels of grace," we are too often dreaming of a grace which would make us dependent in the wrong sense, which therefore would be no true grace at all. There is no time when Christ is not as near to us as he can ever be in the sacrament, never to overcome our temptation for us and never to override our own insight and character, but always to awaken our insight and to enable us ourselves to choose the right because we see it to be right and ourselves to triumph over temptation.[1] It may be Bunyan for once misleads us when he suggests that grace is as oil which a man may cast secretly upon the fire. Grace is not a force which operates magically in the subconscious recesses of the soul but strictly a gracious personal relationship, a fellowship in which we walk.

Thus the beginning of the religious life is not a yielding of ourselves to an irresistible might,[2] nor a

[1] Church worship and special occasions may be like the vision on the mountain top, but that vision means nothing unless the wealth and the knowledge that we derive from it help and guide us through the valley to the end of the journey.

[2] As "Catholicism" and "Augustinianism" and "Calvinism" in different forms imply.

clenching of the fist and a grim setting of the teeth[1] but that faith whereby we apprehend that we are not alone on a weary waste in dreadful isolation but in a Father's house and set in the midst of brethren, that our Elder Brother is by our side to succour our weakness and to awaken our insight. Faith, not grim resolution, is the beginning, and with such a faith we may be more than conquerors.[2]

V. Prayer

We have come now to the end of this little book, and but one thing more remains to be said. We have seen that religion is not a matter of ecstasy and feeling, nor is it a life that can be magically imparted through sacraments, nor is it a matter of theory and of orthodoxy, nor finally is it a lonely and grim following of Jesus Christ, though follow him we must. Rather it is, as we have so often insisted, the right attitude to life. In so far as we are religious, we see things truly, we face reality; we see ourselves as we really are; we see our neighbour and love him as Jesus sees and loves him; we find every experience that comes to us a gracious ministry of God, a means of communion, a sacrament and "holy mystery." "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" Experience is but the condition and the means of our

[1] As "Socinianism" and "Pelagianism" and "Arminianism" in different forms imply.

[2] I have attempted in this section to state in the simplest possible terms the main contention of Part I of Dr. Oman's *Grace and Personality*.

" walk with God." Thus to live is to pray. Therefore I conclude with a few words about prayer.

Our prayer must be communion or, we may almost say, conversation with God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he speaks to us in every circumstance and every relation of life; for life is the divine liturgy. But there is a psychological necessity that we should set aside certain times for meditation and communion in quiet.[1] The natural time is the morning before the day's work begins. We have need to spread out the day before God, to foresee so far as we are able our temptations and our duties and our opportunities, to pray for those whom we are likely to meet, to seek the right spirit in which to enter upon the day. And the language that we should use must always be natural and such as becomes children. There is a great tendency in these days in the Churches that by tradition have preferred " their rough, home-brewed prayers " to " the State's mellower forms " to go back to " book-prayers " and splendid liturgies. Therefore I cannot forbear to quote from an old letter of the sixteenth century :[2]

" And for your part you think me a liar because

[1] The psychological necessity referred to above arises from the constant need to see things in their right proportions and values, and also to settle rightly the continual conflicts which arise for honest men as they face the obligations of life. The man who has no stated times is like the man who neglects to tidy his desk until it is in hopeless confusion. The true secret of tidiness is to tidy as you go on, *i.e.* every day.

[2] Presumably by John Greenwood; see *Relics of the Puritan Martyrs*, 1593 (Congregational Historical Society), p. 26 ff. I have modernised the spelling and made one or two alterations necessary to the sense.

I said reading prayers is a quenching of the Spirit in them that have the gift of praying. But I say it is not so, for if we would narrowly examine ourselves, we should find a great untowardness in ourselves or in our flesh, which striveth against the Spirit, for our flesh telleth like a white devil it is dangerous going to God by our conceived manner of prayer; for, saith it, thou mayest set down thy words indiscreetly, and so thy prayer maybe will turn to be a curse unto thee, therefore make sure work and take thee to a book prayer. But the Spirit that striveth against the flesh saith unto us, why yield unto the fleshly and mistrusting motion, for I will help thee; go unto prayer and I will guide thy words and tell thee how to pray, and what to say, and to whom, and in whose name; and I will make thee to be full of great sighs and groans, which care not to be expressed; but he that sent thee to me to make thee cry Abba Father, he knoweth the meaning of the Spirit in thee. . . . All this I have said unto you by only feeling in myself, for true it is my flesh is more willing to take a book prayer to go before my God withal five times rather than that I should go once by conceiving prayer. . . . Besides, if prayer be nothing but a pouring out of grief unto God in asking the things that we know needful, with a hungry desire to obtain them, whether for ourselves or for our brethren, or for common wealth, or especially for the glory of God and hallowing of his name, how can we with peace of conscience take a book of prayer of another man's grief to God withal, and not rather lay all things aside and fall down at Christ's feet, and pour out our grief unto him?"

I do not wish to deny the value of written prayers for our reading and meditation, but this hankering after a liturgy and more stately and "dignified" forms of prayer, though valuable as a protest against careless and unduly familiar and slipshod speaking, is in danger of leading us away from the language of the home to the polished and distant civilities of a royal court. But if prayer is conversation with God, then it is not only we that speak to him but also he that speaks to us. This is a difficulty to many people, because they do not know in what way to expect to hear God's voice nor what manner of thing they should expect God to say to them. We have maintained throughout this book that life is the sacrament and that it is in life we meet with God. When we go aside for prayer, we are not to expect that we shall have some hitherto unknown information imparted to us mysteriously; we must not mistake every thought that comes into our minds as the voice of God. His word is always relative to life; he brings home to us the real significance of that which we have but partially understood; he makes more light to shine forth from the life and teaching of Jesus Christ; he enables us to see and love our duty; in a word, he imparts to us the mind of Christ relative to our life and need, and thus he gives himself to us and we give ourselves to him. But God can only speak to a man as that man is able to hear. He cannot speak to Abraham about polygamy; what a man will hear depends upon what he is. God leads us step by step; "thy gentleness hath made me great." Theoretically that part of prayer is most difficult to understand which is called intercession. Is it really possible that by my prayers I can help the

recovery of my sick friend and the work of the missionaries in foreign lands? We must always remember that prayer is not a dodge; we must be careful that we do not want to learn the secret of it in the way that Simon Magus might have done; and we must be careful not to think that there is a kind of science of prayer which when the rules are kept will accomplish all wonders, as the magicians used to use their incantations. There can be no trick about prayer; there is no other omnipotence for prayer than there is for God. The beings whom we would affect are free beings. There is far too much evidence for the effect of intercessory prayer for us to set it aside as delusion and coincidence; the only question is how can we understand it, that we may practise it aright. The explanation that follows is not at present to be demonstrated, but it explains the kind of way in which the operation of prayer is intelligible in a world of free beings. For the difficulty to be met is this, that if prayer accomplishes nothing it is useless to pray, but if prayer is omnipotent there is no moral or religious value in that which it accomplishes; for instance, if by prayer I can compel so-and-so to give money to the poor, there is no kindness in his doing so; I have not awakened his insight nor enabled him to do what is right because he himself sees it to be right; I have used a kind of violence with him.

We may start with that which I take to be all but proven beyond cavil, namely that it is possible under certain conditions for one person to transmit a thought to another person far away and to transmit a mood which gives rise to a certain order of thoughts. We may also remember that personality,

as we saw above, is not spatial, and that we may really say that our absent friend is by our side. Now, there are certain people who as soon as they come into the room bring with them, as we say, such an "atmosphere" as that all that is best in us is fortified and strengthened, and in their presence it is comparatively easy for us to do what we know to be right. If they could compel us, there would be no value in their presence, but *they* enable *us* to do the right. Now when we pray for some one absent, I conceive that in effect we go and stand by them; we cannot compel them, but we can help to create an atmosphere for them in which it is easier for them to do that which is right. If we pray for a sick friend, we stand by him and help him to overcome if it be possible.[1] If we pray for a tempted friend, we stand by him and help him to fight his own battle and to overcome. This does not strictly *explain* intercessory prayer, but it indicates how prayer is really effective for our absent friends when it is irreligious to desire to fight their battles for them or to expect God to change his purpose toward them.

In fine, religion is a matter of reconciliation, reconciliation with God, reconciliation with man and reconciliation with life. For them that love God all things work together for good; for all others nothing works for good, and life is meaningless. Perfect love casts out fear; for in every experience God can come to us and to our friends; nothing can separate from him, not life, not death.

On the eve of his martyrdom John Green-

[1] We are coming to learn that recovery from illness is more a matter of spiritual vitality than ever we imagined.

wood wrote from prison a pastoral letter to his flock :[1]

"The Archbishop very peremptorily called for my keeper, and because I would not swear committed me very rigorously to straight and close prison; where I remain till God deliver me. The Lord grant me a holy use of this his loving visitation; for surely this good the enemy doth me to separate me from this wicked world—from God's dear children they cannot, to whom through the virtue and mercies of Christ Jesus I am inseparably joined. Pray for me, dear brethren, that I may not resist and hinder this gracious work of the Lord, who beginneth to summon me out of this world, yea, to prepare my journey, and I hope will shortly accomplish it; the rather if the man of Canterbury may have his will, who is preparing me a fiery chariot to pass in. But this to the Lord, and all to the Lord, and you to the Lord; pray for me, that the Lord will strengthen me to seal with my blood to you that which Christ hath sealed with his blood to me and you. I thank the Lord of his grace, and I thank the Lord for you always, being mindful of you in all my prayers, that the Lord would establish your hearts in his truth and increase your joy in the practice thereof; that whether I go before you, or come after you, whether we be severed or meet, we may always have to rejoice before God our Father in Christ; to whom with the Holy Spirit inseparably be all glory and praise for ever. Amen."

[1] *Relics of the Puritan Martyrs*, 1593, p. 23, spelling again modernised. I have again made one or two small alterations in the interests of sense.

This memorable letter thus concludes:

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen. Beloved, keep yourselves from idols."

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